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STUDIES IN MUSEUM AND MUSEOLOGY IN INDIA

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STUDIES IN MUSEUM AND MUSEOLOGY IN INDIA

BY

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DEDICATED TO THE
MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER

PREFACE

For the last few years, some of my dear students and friends have been continuously urging upon me to publish my lectures, addresses, and research papers on art, archaeology and museology. Unfortunately, prolonged physical ailments and increasing pressure of office work, through the years, prevented my own desire for a publication, from being translated into action. But, now on the eve of my retirement, I resolved to publish at least one book on my work as a teacher and museologist. The present monograph, may in away, be taken as a record of my humble experience as a Museum Curator, extending over thirty years.

From 1937, when the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art was established by the University of Calcutta, upto 1956, i.e. for full twenty years, I was completely engrossed in building up the Asutosh Museum, the first University Museum in India. Except undertaking regular field-work on behalf of Museum, I could scarely take any interest in other extra mural activities. In fact, I was convinced at the end of 1956, as President of the Museums Association of India at Agra when I had the privilege of narrating the story of the development of the Asutosh Museum to the Museum world of India that I had really finished my work and the address itself was my swan-song. But providence decided otherwise. I had to continue as a teacher and a museum worker for another decade or so, during which period had the opportunity of coming into intimate contact with the Museum Movement in India which had, in the meantime, been infused with new life and vigour through the active encouragement of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, for the development of museums. Between 1957-1959, on the initiative of the University Grants Commission, New Delhi, I was entrusted with the work of organising the Post-graduate Diploma Course in Museology at the Calcutta

University and again in 1963, had to take the lead in organising the Museums Association of West Bengal.

Let me take this occasion to pay my homage to the memory of late Dr. Syamaprasad Mukherji, who as the then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta was the moving spirit in establishing the Asutosh Museum named after his father Sir Asutosh Mukherji, the great Indian educationist. I also offer my respectful regards to the former Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Pramathanath Banerjee, Sri Ramaprasad Mukherjee, late Chief Justice of the High Court, Calcutta and to the present Vice-Chancellor, Dr. B. Malik, but for whose encouragement and enthusiastic support to Museum and Museology, it would have been difficult to fullfil my mission in life.

I cannot say, how much I am indebted to my collagues Dr. Kalyan Kumar Ganguli, Lecturer, Department of Museology and Ancient Indian History & Culture and Professor Minendranath Basu, Head, Department of Anthropology, two of my close associates, for their help, cooperation and advice in my work. I must also remember with gratitude late R.C. Kar, Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India and Sri K. R. Srinivasan, Deputy Director, Botanical Survey of India for their sincere and sustained co-operation in the cause of Museology. I am also deeply grateful to my erstwhile students and now collegues, Somenath Bhattacharyya, Santosh Kumar Bose, Dilip Kumar Roy and Adyanath Mukherjee, Lecturers in the Department of Museology, besides Chittaranjan Roychaudhury, Assistant Curator, Asutosh Museum, Mrinal Kanti Pal, former Research Scholar of the Museum for their unstinted help and devoted work in all aspects of museum work. For their love and esteem, I would also ever be thankful to my erstwhile students Tarankumar Biswas and Jayantakumar Chakravarty, Government of India Research Fellows in Museum Studies and Museology attached to the Asutosh Museum, Kanchankumar Chakravarty, Lecturer, Kalyani University; not to speak of my other colleagues of the museum staff, Abhindranath Basu, Krishnachandra Sarkar, Prankrishna Pal, Jitendra Lal Nath, Nareshchandra Ghosh, Krishnajiban Bhattacharyya, Syamapada Majumdar, Purnachandra Das and Rameswar Routh, all of whom have assisted me in building up the Museum and the Department of Museology through the years.

Let me also take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to Sri Sankar Sen Gupta, Director of Research, Indian Folklore Society, and the publisher of this work, but for whose persistent efforts it would have been impossible for me to undertake this work, as also to my son-in-law Surg. Lt. Commander A. Mukherjee of the Indian Navy and my life partner Srimati Anjali Ghosh for their help and encouragement in many ways.

To my numerous friends and well-wishers in the museum field here and abroad specially Dr. Grace Morley, Rai Krishnadasa, Sri Sivaramamurti and Dr. Moti Chandra, leaders of the Museum Movement of India today, I offer my warmest greetings for their sympathy and appreciation.

Asutosh Museum of Indian Art
University of Calcutta
September, 1967.

D. P. Ghosh

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Chapter I. Trends in Museology in India (Cultural Forum, Museology Number, New Delhi, 1966); Chapter II. Role of a University Museum in India (Presidential Address, Annual Meeting of the Museums Association of India, Agra, 1956, Journal of Indian Museums, Vol. XII. Bombay 1958); Chapter III. A National Museum of Indian History (Presidential Address, Annual Meeting of the Museums Association, Anand, 1957; Journal of the Abhedananda Academy, Calcutta, 1967); Chapter IV. Archaeological Discoferies in Lower Gangetic Valley (Science & Culture, Vol. 23,, Calcutta, 1957); Chapter V. Hidden Treasures of Sundarban (Amrita Bazar Patrika, Puja Special, Calcutta, 1958); Chapter VI. A Survey of Orissan Arts and Crafts (Indian Folk-Lore, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1956, revised and enlarged); Chapter VII. Museum Movement in India (Sections I, II, III based on Presidential Addresses of the Annual Meetings of the Museums Association, West Bengal, 1964, 1966 and 1967 respectively; Bulletins of the M.A.W.B. Calcutta, 1965 and 1967); Chapter VIII. Museum and Education (Presidential Address, Annual Meeting of the Museums Association, West Bengal, 1965; Bulletin of M.A.W.B. Calcutta, 1966); Chapter IX. Museum in Service of the Community (Proceedings of the Annual Seminar, Museums Association of India, Poona, 1966; Studies in Museology Baroda University, Vol II, 1966); Chapter X. Museum and Museology Training (Paper read at the Annual Seminar, Museums Association of India, New Delhi, 1962; Bulletin M.A.W.B., Calcutta, 1962); XI. Museums in West Bengal (Based on the Address of the Chairman, Host Committee, Fifth Museum Camp, Calcutta, 1967).

I am deeply indebted to the authorities of the respective journals; the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta University; the Museums Association of India and the Museums Association, West Bengal for having given permission for the use of the relevant articles and photographs.

CHAPTER : ONE

TRENDS IN MUSEOLOGY

The recent development of the museums and museum studies in India call for a detailed and careful appraisal. Museology is a comprehensive term covering both the theoretical and practical aspects of museum management. The purpose and nature of museums as educational institutions, their role in the historical and social perspectives are the basic considerations for their study from a theoretical standpoint. The practical aspects concerning the world of museums are varied and intimately related to their basic requirements. Collection of specimens, their fabrication and related documentation work are considered to be the most important technical features. Museums are generally established for the preservation and display of objects of nature and objects made by man. Conservation of specimens based on minute observation and understanding of their material composition as conditioned by the organic chemical reactions on them, is another fundamental factor which influence museological studies to a great extent. In fact, documentation and techniques of collection along with the methods of conservation constitute the bedrock of museology. On these twin bases, the superstructure of museum display and exhibition for education and higher research support itself.

In India the origin and development of museum movement is more than a hundred and fifty years old. Here we need not go into details of the factors which influenced this movements in its multifarious facets. In short, we may say that a pair of enlightened English and Danish savants Sir William Jones and Nathanial Wallich, associated with the Asiatic Society of Bengal, were indeed the pioneers of the museum movement in India as early as 1784, in humanities and natural history respectively. In fact, their collections formed the the nucleus of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, perhaps the greatest multipurpose museum in Asia which was opened in 1814. This movement gained further impetus of Indians themselves who wanted to have a greater understanding of the glorious heritage of the past, covering a period of five thousand years or so, illustrated by India's magnificent archaeological remains and the still continuing traditional arts and crafts. The establishment of different organisations by the Government of India and the excellent work undertaken by botanists like Roxburg and others in the Botanical Garden at Sibpur, Howrah, contributed much towards the growth of museums and museum-like institutions in this country. In short, the active interest concerning all aspects of India's natural and cultural wealth intermingled with the patriotic Indian urge to underline both antiquity and richness of Indian culture, produced and strengthened the museum movement in India.

From the beginning of the present century to the end of British rule in India we primarily find the development of archaeological museums. By and large, this development was, however, handicapped by a widespred paucity of technical personnel and a comparative rarity of scientific apparatus and application of scientific techniques. Concentration of museological centres at cities like Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, with big multipurpose museums, gradually focussed the need for a better distribution of the museum potential of the country and better museum arrangement. The first attempt at a kind of an overall appraisal of the museum foundation in India was undertaken by the Museums Association, London. S. F. Markham and H. Hargreaves were entrusted to make a comprehensive Survey of Museums in this sub-continent. The report of this Survey was published in the year 1936 and made an effective impact on the need of overhauling and modernising museum service in India.

The Second World War and its aftermath saw the emergence of an Independent India. It cannot be denied that as a direct result of this historic phenomenon the Museum Movement received the highly needed inspiration and encouragement from different quarters, specially from the national government. The importance of museums in the educational set up of the country, was first highlighted by the formation of the Museums Association of India, as an adjunct of the Indian History Congress at Banaras in 1944. For the last few years, it is fortunately meeting annually as a separate entity. Another eventful step is the report of the Museum Expert Survey Committee in 1956 which led to the subsequent formation of the Central Advisory Board of Museums by the Government of India. The establishment of the National Museum at New Delhi in 1949 with a highly competent management which now leads the country in Museum orientation, can be considered as yet another landmark of museum development in India. It can also be mentioned here that as early as 1937 the University of Calcutta, started the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, the first University museum in India, which though handicapped by space and financial resources could interpret the diverse ways and the modern museum ideals, besides its regular programmes of archaeological excavation and exploration. Other factors of far reaching consequence of post-independent era are the implementation of two year comprehensive Post-Graduate Diploma Course in Museology at the Universities of Baroda and Calcutta* under the auspices of the University Grants Commission in 1959 to train and equip the much needed qualified museum personnel. The enlightened policy of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research in the establishment of Museums of Science and Technology, the encouragement given towards the development of Childrens Museums uuder Public Trust or Governmental management and the establishment of Planetarium in Calcutta also invigorated the movement in recent times besides filling up a conspicuous lacuna.

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* Mr. Philip Rawson, the UNESCO expert in his report on "India, Museology" (Paris, 1964) has asserted that 'India too, leading the world in University teaching of Museology students. The Post-Graduate courses, first at Baroda and then at Calcutta have set a notable precedent what so far has been followed only in one University in the U.S.A."

Further, inaugaration by the Union Ministry of Education of Museology Camps for the intensive study of particular museological problems under the guidance of Dr. Grace Morley, the indefatigable and distinguished Director of the National Museum. The encouragement given for the study-tour of foreign museums by competent Indian museum men from different parts of the country also contributed to a more deep-rooted understanding of museology as a subject needing a sustained study, envisaging the changing trends and rapid strides by modern museum abroad. The formation of the Museums Association, West Bengal in 1962, with its active programmes of providing a platform for museum workers and popularising museums in this part of the country, has also shown the way how regional associations like this, can try to broadbase the museum movement, although in a modest way.

In recent years the definition of the term museum has assumed a much more wider scope and meaning. According to the modern conception museums include all kinds of institutions where original specimens and actual things are displayed for public education. Naturally, therefore, Botanical Gardens, Aquaria and Zoological Gardens with their collection of live specimens, Herbaria, Public Libraries having a permanent display of rare books and manuscripts come within the scope of this term. All kinds of teaching museums, specially those connected with the study of medicine and natural history in the graduate and post-graduate levels also fall within this category.

With this background, let us now proceed to note the nature of progress in the primary function of museum collection, preservation and education in India. The gradual expansion and multiplicity of museums in this country, have given rise to problems which can be properly met only by the adoptation of the latest documentation techniques. All kinds of museum documentation require a rigid adherence to a definite code of rules, keeping in mind the nature and quality of objects kept by the respective museums. In this, it is noteworthy that the Archaeological Survey of

India; the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay; the National Museum, New Delhi and the Crafts Museum also in the same city, have already, taken up the work of keeping their museum records in highly flexible and technically sound card system catalogues. The preservation of museum specimens was previously considered to be a simple job devoid of any need for a careful study and handling. Prolongation of the life of a object indeed a basic museum criterion is a difficult problem in the damp tropical climate of India. An awareness of this problem of checking deterioration of museum objects by natural and other agencies is attested recently by the establishment of the highly efficient and well equipped preservation laboratory of the National Museum and the bronze cleaning and preservation apparatus of the Government Museum at Madras. The stress laid on museum conservation as a compulsory subject of study in Museology Courses of the Calcutta and Baroda Universities can also be mentioned in this connection.

Suitable methods of presentation in the peculiar climate and atmospheric condition prevailing in India is another problem giving rise to conflicting views. The placement of the exhibits is a subject which is conditioned by various factors including the controversial point of excluding natural light altogether. Some of these are related to the nature of the exhibits themselves as to their shape, colour, form and method of manufacture. However, nicely placed, a museum exhibition can seldom be attractive if it fails to show a meaningful and connected story. Even the depiction of a connceted story within the museum gallery may not be of much benefit because it totally disregards the visual aspects of educational psychology. Presentation of exhibits in relation to their atmosphere and background must change and vary widely. For this reason, modern museum men working in the more developed regions of the world have already undertaken different types of controlled experiments. Selective judgement is applied to restrict the number of exhibits, educationally sound, to be installed within a particular display area. Psychological experiments of this kind can also be utilised for ascertaining the aesthetic quality or attractiveness of a particular gallery. In this connection it is often forgotten by museum enthusiasts that purely artificial lighting of Indian sculptures arranged in an archaeological gallery is not enough for sculptures which formerly adorned the exteriors of temple walls and meant to be seen in the brilliant Indian sunlight. Focussed interior light fail to bring out the subtle nuances of modelling dependent on the changing course of the sun. Field experiments to closely observe the behaviour and response of rural people as undertaken by some UNESCO experts a couple of years ago in the rural areas of Mysore can also open up vast possibilities of utilising museum and museum techniques for the dissemination of agricultural, cultural and craft education in the rural areas. It may be emphasised here, that a general awareness of the changing condition of museums in India, so far as their organisational and educational aspect is concerned, has led recently to a serious attempt at giving a face—left to the galleries of the principal museums specially in presentation and lighting, according to modern standards. In this regard the new State Museum of Lucknow incorporates new ideas in a pleasing and effective manner.

Educational programming with a view to correlate the school curriculam with the museum programmes is altogether a new development in the museum world. Installation of travelling exhibitions and loan collections of museum exhibits in secondary schools can also be cited as special feature of modern museum work. The introduction of the Guide Lecture system in Madras Museum, for the first time in 1941, followed by the Asutosh Museum in the next year were pioneering attempts. The establishment of the education department of the National Museum, New Delhi, the excellent school service run by the Maharastra Industrial Museum, Poona and the latest endeavour of the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta in organising touring shows in rural areas of West Bengal are important steps.

To encourage higher research, museums need a consistant policy of publications. Publications of standard type require a thorough scholarship and a thorough knowledge of the museum exhibits based on comparative study and other technicalities of book production. Some of them are intended to record the administrative activities of the museum while others are intended for popular consumption. During the last few years definite attempts are being made to raise the standard of Museum publications, specially by making them attractive and colourful. Multi-coloured post-cards of the Asutosh Museum, National Museum, Crafts Museum, Baroda Museum etc. have been greatly admired by the public. Scholarly catalogues, monographs and bulletins as published by the Prince of Wales Museum, Madras Government Museum, National Museum and the Asutosh Museum have greatly contributed in the field of higher studies. Here it may be noted that for a better research work in museum the Union Ministry of Education has already instituted, during the last few years, Research Fellowships in Museology and Museum Studies, attached to different museums in India. It need not be stressed that more such scholarships and fellowships should be added in the coming years not only to interpret museum treasures but also to make the people at large museum minded.

In India, it is the appropriate time to make ourselves more concerned with museum which can easily function as important instruments in the development of the country in all spheres. Unfortunately for us, people here are yet to appreciate the import of audio-visual education. An urgent revision of the current educational system is needed to make people realise that real education should avoid unnecessary verbalism and object reliance on printed books. Museum education can ultimately help in creating a generation of students who will posses a better understanding of the world around them and a better sense of aesthetic appreciation. For this a thorough integration of the Museum with all levels of educational system, beginning from the primary stage, is urgently required in India.

CHAPTER : TWO

THF ROLE OF UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

A University Museum is predominantly designed to serve as an educational and cultural centre for the general public and the students in particular. Naturally it is a centre where scholarly aspects of museum work can be emphasised. It is at the same time a centre where all types of museum activities can be organised and developed.

Based on my experience as a Museum Curator for the last thirty years, here are some significant facts regarding the growth and development of a typical academic museum, its advantages and handicaps which may be considered carefully by the museum authority at the time of initiating a new museum and by the students of museology.

The Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, although the first University Museum in India, is nevertheless one of the youngest Museums in this country. Started in 1937, by the University of Calcutta, in the rear portion of the Senate Hall, a place not very happily suited for a Museum to grow, it had to face initial difficulties from the very beginning. The people who have visited the Museum at that time must have noticed the tangible efforts to adapt the uncongenial environment and strictly limited area originally built for other purposes, to display its varied collections. Circumstances demanded a general use of movable pedestals and specially designed island-cases to avoid overcrowding and frequent arrangement of exhibits in vertical cubes or pyramids with receding platforms, necessitated by exigencies of space.

There is a general feeling in India, specially among small unofficial Museums, that museum development is particularly retarded for want of funds and paucity of adequate materials for display. I believe that the University Museums can show the way to circumvent these difficulties at least to Art, Archaeological and Historical museums if not to the Natural History and Anthropology Museums. India like Greece, Italy, Egypt and China is predominantly rich in antiquarian remains; in fact, she is perhaps the richest of all the countries in the world in this respect. Boasting of a culture and civilisation five thousand years and more, relics of the past in the shape of endless crumbling monuments and sculptures are strewn over the countryside. Unknown materials and records in abundant measures are hidden underneath the thousands of undulating mounds that rise from flat plains and deserts or crown enigmatically forlorn hilltops. Archaeological museums naturally dominate in India as India is one of the oldest countries in the world with a continuity of cultural tradition matched only by China. The rich potentiality of India in antiquarian remains and art treasures, is strikingly revealed in the life history of the Asutosh Museum. It opened with twenty objects, rising to 1,228 at the end of the first year and 2,423 in the second. They increased to 6,000 by September, 1939 and at end of 1941, when it was decided to take emergency measures to meet the prevailing war situation, in Eastern India, they were counted as 7000. During the last twenty-five years the number has more than doubled, swelling to 13,000 only by the middle of 1956. The collection comprise of stone sculptures, terracotta objects, paintings, banners, illuminated manuscripts, metal and ivory objects, wood carvings, textiles, coins and objects of folk-art, some of them are unique and outstanding in quality and merit.

It is not only desirable to develop a University Museum as a regional one like the Asutosh Museum which was established to collect and preserve objects of art and antiquity from Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, but circumstances and available facilities also naturally help such growth. It may be recalled here that before the establishment of the Asutosh Museum, there were very few museum pieces relating to art and archaeology of Bengal prior to the Gupta period and after the mediaeval age. Now in less than thirty years time it is possible to study in this rather small institution attached to the University of Calcutta, the artistic and cultural expression of Bengal, for more than two thousand years without any break, from the 3rd century B. C. upto modern times, with the help of selective and comprehensive records available here.

Without much financial assistance, from the authorities and without any grant or endowment either from the public or the State, the Asutosh Museum, perhaps, also illustrates how a museum can develop in this country inspite of apparent handicaps. It is indeed significant that the Calcutta University, out of its meagre resources could barely spend about thirty thousand rupees on actual collection and purchase during the first twenty years. Experts have, on the other hand, assessed the total value of the Museum collections, to nearly thirty lacs. Field collections and private benefactions are the two principal pillars on which this Museum mainly supports itself.

One of the principal ideals of an academic museum should be to maintain a close *liason* between students, teachers and the museum staff for the enrichment of a museum at very little financial outlay. The guiding motive of such a centre should be to train and encourage the students and teachers in particular and the members of the public in general to participate in the all—engrossing hunt for antiquities and specimens, to secure the treasures and valuable data, lying hither and thither and make it a point to present them to the *alma mater*. During the brief period of its existence Asutosh Museum has been enriched not only by the members of staff, but its collections and is vastly augmented by a selfless band of honorary workers from the public, not to say of enthusiastic group of students and teachers of schools and colleges.

The second UNESCO International Seminar on the 'Role of Museums in Education held' in Athens in 1954, emphasised the aspect of closer contact between Museums and educational institutions.

A direct result of intense and widespread hunt for relics, past and present, has recently yielded fruit in a most unexpected manner. So far few people suspected existence of antiquarian remains of considerable age in lower Bengal, deltaic marshy and noted for frequent changes of its vast network of riverine channels and estuaries. So long principal archaeological finds have been with few exceptions, associated with the hard soil of north Bengal. During 1954-1956, exploration work carried out with the help mainly of students and teachers of affiliated schools and colleges under the leadership of the Museum personnel. They have led to the discovery of eight hitherto unknown archaeological sites within a radius of fifty miles of Calcutta. A local railway clerk shares the main credit of exploring Chandraketugarh, extensive city area bearing evidence of continuous occupation from the Mauryya to the Mediaeval times which have yielded besides early terracotta figurines of exquisite beauty recalling those from Mathura, Patna, Kausambi and Ahichchatra; unique Greek inscribed tablets, potteries and terracotta sculptures Roman in character, almost a hoard of silver punch marked coins and a few Gupta gold coins of a rare variety.

A student of Ancient Indian History and Culture of the University of Calcutta has discovered another definitely Sunga and Kushan site, unfortunately being eroded by the Ganga at the estuary. It may also prove to be a sea-port having maritime contact with the Western World in the opening centuries of the Christian era, just like famous Tamralipta, which itself together with its environs has been successfully explored under the auspices of the Museum. Sometime in October 1956 another University student has given clue to the possibility of the existence of a fairly ancient settlement by the find of important antiquities. These significant finds in unexpected corners of the country provided experts and specialists to alter some ideas and notions and offered to chart out a new chapter to the heritage of India. It may be noted here that the preliminary explorations at Sisupalgarh in Orissa and Tamluk (ancient Tamralipta) in West Bengal under the auspices of the Museum paved the way for the successive scientific excavations at both the places by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Besides comprehensive exploration in Eastern India, the University of Calcutta was the first non-official institution in India which is launching a series of scientific archaeological excavations in Bengal since last thirty years. Sustained efforts by trained professors, lecturers and research fellows of the University in the field of archaeological diggings have enriched the Museum collection not a little and helped in unravelling the remote past. A University Museum is also the happy meeting ground of the expert and the student. The series of archaeological excavations have provided many opportunities for the University students to be associated with actual digging operations. In this way it can offer enough facilities for the students to have practical training in field work and Museum technique, thus fulfilling one of the major purposes of a purely educational Museum. In an indirect way this co-ordination of the teacher and the student also greatly reduces the over all cost of such undertakings.

A University is favourably placed so far as gifts of private collections are concerned. In America, it is almost a part of religion, for the millionaire collectors and connoisseurs to bequeath their priceless treasures to the Museums and Art Galleries, either in their life-time or after their death. American museums have greatly thrived on this generous help of the public. In India too the same spirit should be emulated by wealthy private donors and benefactors for the nourishment of public museums. Personally I think, it is easier to persuade the rich or the lowly collector to make a present of his or her collection to the museum which is an integral part of the Temple of Learning. Gift of large and valuable collections of rare variety and outstanding merit from generous private donors, from all walks of life, have indeed contributed not a little to the present prosperity of the Museum. Even veteran dealers, after some amount of personal pleading are ultimately persuaded to offer at nominal prices their art treasures, as votive offerings to this Temple of Learning. Although we are aware of the fact that they cannot expect the same monetary gain for their wares, which may be secured from other quarters, strangely enough, they come still.

An academic Museum provides precise demonstration of museum uses by college and school students and of planned co-operation between museums and educators. It should be utilised to help teachers of any kind to understand the use of museums in their teaching. Museum workers and lecturers should play their role as intermediaries linking[1] specialists and ordinary public as well as specialists and scholars.[2] The Second UNESCO Seminar on the 'Role of Museums in Education' also laid particular stress that teacher training should include training in museum use. A Teachers' Training Certificate course in Art Appreciation with the museum as the background, a unique educational feature in India also commenced from 1941 and is having a successful run since then.

It need not be emphasised that a University museum, compares favourably with other museums and offers the best facilities for carrying on research by students on the multifarious aspects or museum collections, under the guidance of museum personnel who are simultaneously teachers, as well as University Professors. In this respect, naturally, the University library is of great help to the inquisitive learner in specialised and comparative study. Facilities are also available here with regard to the publication of research papers. To implement programme of lectures on museums and cognate subjects assistance of a large number of specialists from the University may also be available.

Exhibitions held under the auspices of the Museum have greatly profited by the services of student volunteers in explaining and interpreting exhibits to the public at large. Some of the largest exhibitions, held in Calcutta directly under the auspices of the Museum and sometimes jointly with other institutions have proved to be excellent training grounds of students acting as *liason* between the exhibits and members of the public. Illustrating the way in which a modern museum should play its part as an intellectual centre in the social life of the country, these series of cultural exhibitions may be remembered (1) the All India History Congress and the Indian Historical Records Commission Exhibition, 1938, (2) Calcutta Geographical Exhibition, 1941, (3) Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Paintings, 1943, (4) Children's Art Exhibition, 1943, (5) Exhibition of Paintings by Phanibhusan, 1943, (6) Exhibition of Photographs of mediaeval Indian sculpture, 1944, (7) Sir Goorodas Banerjee Centenary Exhibition, 1944, (8) Exhibition of Bengal Art, 1945, (9) Exhibition of the Art of Afghanistan, 1946, (10) International Buddhist Art Exhibition, 1949, (11) Soviet Fine Arts Exhibition, 1952, (12) All India History Congress and Museums Association of India Exhibition, 1955 and many others since then. The numbers of exhibitions are getting increased every year and it is expected that when the book will appear this list of exhibition could be added with some hundred names.

That a typical art museum in India should not restrict its activities to the burried past only but try to envisage the living tradition of the glorious heritage and the continuity of the peculiar mode of Indian artistic expression of the last 5,000 years and more by collecting select specimens of the arts and crafts of villages from different parts of the country. The Folk Art Gallery of the Asutosh Museum vividly illustrating the undying tradition of Indian culture is a distinctive feature of the Museum. In this respect it is not merely a "Storehouse of the Dead" as most of the museums in India are. A scheme was devised in 1941 on Rural Culture Survey to revitalise and rehabilitate the fast disappearing traditional crafts, under the terrible impact of the modern machine age. Special steps have been taken and a research scholar appointed to survey the condition of contemporary rural arts and crafts of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, having a large bearing on the cultural life of this region, so that they may be incorporated in future, in a Directory.

Cleaning and preservation of museum objects is one of the greatest problems of all museums and it is a special headache for the smaller ones. This problem has been tackled with some amount of success by inter-departmental co-operation in the University of Calcutta. The services of part-time science professors and teachers have enabled the Asutosh Museum to set up a laboratory for cleaning and preservation where original investigations in museum methods are also carried out.

One of the most important, if not the most important functions, of a University Museum is to open a comprehensive course in Museology. "The University and larger Museums" says the Report of the Expert Museum Survey Committee, "should co-operate in organising courses on museology which must have both an adequate academic content and also a sufficient measure of practical training".[4]

We are on the threshold of big changes so far as the musuem movement is concerned. The Report of the Expert Museum Survey Committee, as adopted by the Central Advisory Board of Museums, is to be welcomed generally. Future improvement and reorganisation of museums depends to a large extent on the question of financial assistance from the Government. The reported sum allotted in the Five Year Plan programmes are not indeed encouraging for the museum movement to gain the momentum required.

The progress and development of all museums in this country, academic, unofficial, or official, depend on enlightened patronage of the authorities. Even in the highest seats of learning there are certain misconceptions about the role of museums in education. As the system of education prevalent in India for the last one hundred years and more has got a predominant bias for bookish learning, the utility of visual aids has been completely neglected. So it is not unnatural to find most of our professors and teachers, not to speak of the officials, often looking askance on the real purpose and usefulness of a museum. They even scoff at it as a mere lumber house of fragmentary potsherds, ugly defaced images and torn decomposed fabrics. Yet a museum worker has got to fight relentlessly against public apathy and sneer of the intelligentsia. To a museum curator his avocation should be part of his *Dharma*. He should neither be cowed down by signs of apparent indifference nor elated by occasional favours and sympathy from quarters unexpected. All museum workers must devote their energies with a fanatical zeal to the cause of museology and all it stands for. Museums must take their rightful place in the ordered scheme of things, as an indispensible instrument for the educational and cultural uplift of the people.[5]

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1. When the Senate House was demolished in 1960, the Museum was removed for a few years to 14, Bidhan Sarani, Calcutta. By 1967, when Museum was finally shifted to its permanent home in the new Centenary Building, built on the site of old Senate Hall, the collection rose to about 25,000, visually recording the evolution of Indian art from 1st millinium B. C. to contemporary period.

2. In 1967 it was estimated at several crores.

3. At Bangarh, District Dinajpur; 1937-41 Nanur, District Birbhum, 1947; Tilda, District Midnapore, 1954; and Chandraketugarh, District 24th Parganas from 1957 up to the time of writing this chapter—all are in West Bengal.

4. Since started in 1959 at the Asutosh Museum.

5. For further details regarding organisation and administration of the Asutosh Museum, see Appendix A.

CHAPTER : THREE

A NATIONAL MUSEUM OF INDIAN HISTORY

It cannot be gainsaid that time is now ripe for the establishment of a National Museum where it is possible to have a comprehensive glimpse of the entire panorama of Indian History, starting from the earliest times down to modern days. Here is a broad outline of the scheme.

In our country where the standard of living and educational progress is still very low, a National Museum of this type, based mainly on three dimensional visual aids and painted background will not only directly appeal to the masses but will also actively serve as an educative and intellectual centre of no mean importance. Necessarily, careful guidance of a Board of Experts, consisting of scholars, historians, artists, sculptors, architects, archaeologists and others will be required for a couple of years at best, to give shape to this rather ambitious scheme. This task is not beyond our capacity, either technically or financially. There is no dearth of indigenous clay modellers, sculptors of outstanding merit who can do justice and who can infuse life into the historical scenes and the great personages who have moulded history and culture of our land; neither there is want of expert collaborators. In about fifty to hundred kiosks, show-cases and dioramas, scenes from thousands of years of Indian history, have to be selected and recreated visually and be made striking with three dimensional effect and colour rhapsody. As far as possible, each subject should be distinguished by an authentic flavour in costume and jewellery, features and environment with the help of contemporary literary, historical, epigraphic, numismatic and other archaeological relics and antiquities. Principal events and faces, not merely political, but others, which clearly express the unique and richly variegated texture of Indian culture and civilisation, naturally to be stressed upon with special emphasis on the underlying nourishing spirit which has sustained India throughout the ages.

The archaeologist's spade has recovered from oblivion an entirely new chapter for India, showing a full-fledged urban culture and civilisation, prevalent in the north-west, west and centre, about 5,000 years ago, whose roots yet to be unearthed, must go back a few thousands years or more. These discoveries have enabled India to be placed now on the same pedestal with Egypt and Sumer, Elam and China, boasting of the earliest civilisation in humam history. The Chalcolithic culture of India, spread over thousands of years beginning from the third millenium B. C., may be suitably illustrated in three or four kiosks based on authentic archaeological and artistic materials from excavations at Kulli, Chanhu-daro, Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Lothal, Nevasaa and Nagda. First of all the great climatic change which had taken place during the historic period in the now arid sprawling Indus Valley zone, to be depicted by introducing a tropical forest scene peopled by tropical fauna, tigers, rhinoceros, elephants. alligators etc. Highly developed town-planning and civic sense of those far off days, may be graphically shown by reconstructing one of the high-ways, of Mohenjo-daro, flanked by buildings in brick and interconnecting drainage system, crowded with citizens and wheeled traffic. Another kiosk or diorama may be assigned to the great bath of Mohenjo-daro with adjacent structures containing the well-known figures of the royal priest engaged in a sacrifice or dancing girls performing dances either before terracotta images of the great mother goddess or the earliest manifestations of Siva, Rudra or Agni of the seals. Portions of the equally flourishing city of Harappa, guarded by massive rampart walls, with its distinctive large granaries to store foodgrains, probably against emergencies, indicating the highly developed political and social consciousness of the people it is to be separately treated. If possible, the trade relations and brisk maritime intercourse between the Harappa people and adjacent countries like Afghanistan as also distant Sumer which directly contributed to the economic prosperity, may also be visibly demonstrated. Recently, excavations at Nagda, the site of ancient Ujjain or Avanti, has clearly revealed the spread and survival of this culture down the Narmada Valley uptil 1,000 B. C., hitherto unknown phenomena which needs proper emphasis in a Museum of our contemplation, assisted by the relics of life and minor antiquities.

As yet devoid of much archaeological evidence, the Vedic age, although the fountain head of Indian culture and civilisation has to be illustrated by reproducing the *Ashrama* life in the forests where the performance of a sacrifice with elaborate rituals on the sanctified prescribed altar, participated by venerable *Rishis* and *Brahmabadins* chanting the *Mantras* may be featured. Here we have to rely more or less on literary than archaeological records in reconstructing the spiritual, social, and political life of the age. The same is true for the succeeding Epic period. For example, in bringing to life the *Vanavasa* of Rama, Laksmana and Sita, symbolising some of the fundamental values of Indian culture, in the absence of authentic historical material, reliance partly on mental imagination cannot be avoided. Similarly with regard to an event in the Kurukshetra battle viz. the eternal episode of Srikrishna preaching the Gita as the charioteer of Arjuna, riding a four horsed chariot, according to the manner of early historical monuments.

The emergence of the two great Indian religions—Jainism and Buddhism in the 6th century B. C. is to be graphically treated by installing two images of Mahavira Vardhamana and Gautama Buddha, either in *Dhyani* or preaching posture, based on much later but familiar sculptures of the Mathura and Sarnath schools. It is not too difficult either to recreate the Mrigadava scene which is indeed a landmark in the history of Buddhism. Picture of industrial and economic life of post-Buddha India, principally based on organisation of guilds or *Sreni* may be attempted from the Jatakas and Bhita excavations.

Now we enter the truly historical period. Henceforth our efforts in recreating the past with the help of multifarious artistic archaeological and literary records, although they may not be strictly contemporary, may meet with a measure of success. For example, to envisage the Persian occupation of the Indus Valley in the 6th century B.C., the notable episode of the Persian general Skylax's maritime expedition down the Indus, a pattern followed by Alexander two centuries later, can be reproduced with the help of antiquities at Susa and Persepolis, so far the figures and armoury of the foreign soldiery are concerned. Next, the historic meeting of Alexander and Puru, against the background of Greek phalanx and Indian war elephants can also be easily depicted; Puru to be dressed in the costume and jewellery associated with royal figures of Bharhut railings. Particular care should be taken to faithfully delineate Chandra Gupta Mauryya's imperial city of Pataliputra, which according to Megasthenes surpassed the splendour of the Persian metropolis. From the reliefs of Bharhut and Sanchi, the palisaded city with fortified towers, battlements and storied palaces may be easily conjectured and one of the many *toranas* may be shown with the emperor himself emerging on a caparisoned elephant attended by his famed amazonian guards, the target of attention of the jostling crowd on the street, consisting of foreigners from the four corners of the world, traders and Brahmins not to speak of dainty damsels bedecked with exquisite floral ornaments after the alluring Yaksini tablets of Mathura and Kausambi, Rajghat and Ahichhchatra, Patna and Chandraketugarh.

The greatness of Asoka, noblest of all the Indian monarchs is undoubtedly one of the greatest person the world has ever seen, may, perhaps, be appropriately expressed by a panel representing him as worshipping the Stupa at Sarnath with the lion-pillar which he erected there in the background. His Dhammaghosa may further be vividly illustrated by drawing pictures of various foreign missions including the celebrated one to Ceylon headed by his son Mahendra. The dramatic incident of the conversion of the Greek Heliodoros of Taxila to the Vasudeva cult in the 2nd cenrury B. C.— a pointer to the great synthetic and assimilating power of Indian culture which continued to be a strident feature throughout the ages—may be visualised by showing him making obescience to the *Garudadhvaja* which he himself erected at Besnagar. That Indian life and actions continued to be primarily motivated by religion and supramundane considerations, just before the dawn of the Christian era may be amply illustrated by recreating two royal processions associated with the suzerain powers of the Deccan and Kalinga—one showing a Satakarni going to pay homage to a rock-cut Chaitya shrine of Western India after an identical painting of the 2nd century B. C. in Ajanta Cave No. IX, and another inspired by contemporary relief of Ranigumpha cave, showing Kharavela ascending the steps of the caves in Orissa with the idol of Jaina Tirthankara which according to the Hathigumpha inscription he had recovered from the clutches of the monarch of Pataliputra. From the Kamasutra of Vatsayana, Jatakas and other contemporary literature supplemented by sculptural reliefs of Bharhut and Sanchi enough material can be marshalled to give an insight into the civic life of the people, their manners and customs, pleasures and pastimes of the Sunga period. Special importance may be attached to the recent excavations at Arikamedu, for providing simultaneous materials for recreating a picture of the material and economic prosperity of the country, especially the south, through trade and maritime contact with the Roman world. At the beginning of the Christian era, Arikamedu, may be represented as a great coastal emporium where the Cholas are seen exchanging spices, cotton cloth, pearls and other Indian products with Roman pottery, glassware and gold. Infiltration and adaptation of foreign ideas and modes, in the other extreme of the country viz. the north-west can be portrayed without hesitation by utilising the vast output of the Hellenistic art of Gandhara. Typical Buddhist reliefs can with ease be transformed into political or social picture of the period. For the resplendent Bodhisattva images of Gandhara, with individualistic features set against flamboyant structure, were undoubtedly modelled on living Indo-Scythian or Bactrian princes and their palaces.

The first century A. D. may be signalised by the advent of St. Thomas in Kerala and so of Christianity. Kaniska, the most important figure of the 2nd century, can be happily resurrected from the Mathura portrait. In spite of strong Buddhist leanings, his eclectic taste may be gleaned from his coins struck with Saivite and Mithraic and other deities on the reverse. Attempts may be made to emphasise this aspect of his character. Kalidasa's poems, mural paintings of Ajanta Cave Nos. XVI and XVII, the numerous gold coins of Samudragupta and Chandragupta of the finest variety, are sufficient for the reconstruction of the golden age of the Guptas, its opulence and splendour and the great strides made in fields of literature, arts and science specially astronomy and mathematics. Fa-hien boarding an Indian ship while returning home from the great sea-port of Tamralipta, should be the theme of special treatment because of its cultural and commercial implications. Harshavardhana and Rajyasree at the Kanauj fair, Hiuen-ts-ang studying under Acharyya Silabhadra at Nalanda University, Pulakesin and the Yavana embassy, Pallava adventures setting sail from Kaveripattinam or the Shore temple, Mamallapuram, election of Gopala as the Pala king after a period of anarchy in Bengal, rise of Sankaracharyya, building of the Kailasanatha temple at Ellora by Krishna I, embassy of Balaputradeva, the Srivijaya king of Sumatra, to Devapala, exploits of Lalitaditya Muktapida of Kashmir, Bhoja Paramara of Malwa and the Solanki hero Siddharaj of Gujarat, Shahi and Gurjara-pratihara resistance to Muslim onrush, Nataraja and the Chidambaram temple, the genre scenes from the temples of Khajuraho and Konarak, the naval expedition of Rajendra Chola against Kataha or Malay Peninsula and finally the Muslim conquest of northern India, all these deserve their due share of attention in the proposed Historical Museum.

One of the momentous phases of Indian hisrory is the expansion of Indian culture and influence both in central Asia and in the South-East should also be properly depicted with the aid of three dimensional models. Care should be taken to give bodily shape to such subjects—as the social life of Gandhara from Begram and Hadda finds in Afghanistan, Indian principality of Kucha-Turfan in Central Asia, Chinese silk-traders worshipping at a Buddhist wayside shrine, Indian preachers and artists at work in T'ang China and at the Horiyuji shrine in Nara in Japan. Sojourn of Atisha, the great Nalanda preceptor to Tibet, migration of Tamil culture to Ceylon, king Aniruddha building the Pagan temple in Burma, dedication of the Vishnuloka temple in Siam, the gateway of Angkor-Thom in Cambodia with its tower decorated with four enigmatic faces of Avalokitesvara, flanked by a balustrade of gigantic Devas and Asuras, a monumental transformation in stone of the *Samudramanthana* scene, the magnificent Borobudur in Java, Saiva temples of Champa, headhunters of Celebes looking with awe at the golden image of Buddha—all these may be the sources of inspiration and exhilaration to the onlooker.

As three hundred years of dynastic rule of the Delhi Sultan is full of wars of succession and murders nothing but a few episodes like the building of the Kutub Minar, the lightning expedition of Malik Kafur to the South, Mahammad Tughlaq's mad adventure of transferring the entire Delhi population to Daulatabad and Maharana Kumbha and his Kirttistambha at Chitorgarh may be highlighted. Other singular subject of the early mediaeval period which require detailed delineation are the impact of Islam on Indian life, the great Vaisnava Bhaktas Ramananda ; Kabir and Chaitanya; Guru Nanak; the fabulous prosperity of the city of Vijaynagar under Krishnadevaraya, the impetus to Telugu and Sanskrit literature by Sayana and Madhavacharya; Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur, the patron of art and learning and the principal heir to the great southern empire of Vijayanagara after its debacle at the Battle of Talikota and lastly the public works undertaken in northern India under the aegis of Sher Shah, the Afghan.

Now we enter upon a grand epoch of Indian history viz. the Mughal period, replete with contemporary pictorial and architectural documents of immense value including some of the finest portraits of all ages. Perhaps in no other epoch in the world, has any royal dynasty patronised the arts and artists to produce, with such masterly skill, intimate and faithful pictures of the splendour and pageantry of the court, episodes in the personal lives of the emperors and their encourage not excluding their passions and pastimes. So we are in the fortunate position of recreating the Mughal era in all its glamour and richness. The series of early Mughal School style of paintings enable us to reproduce some of the outstanding events of military expositions of Babar, the humanist; his grandson, Akbar, the great may be shown surrounded by his "Nine Jewels" or intently listening to his favourite debates on religion and theology with notable Hindu, Jain, Islamic, Christian, Zoroastrian and other divines of the age in that handsome edifice "Ibadat Khana" or House of Worship which he had specially built for the purpose in the red-rose dream city of Fathepur Sikri. The seige of Chitor and the valiant opposition to the Badshah in his steam-roller conquest of Northen India can be epitomised by falling back upon relevant paintings of the memorable scene and none too scanty portraits of Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar. To give some ideas of the people and customs of the age, as well as to afford a glimpse into the inner life of the *harem*, the illustration from *Akbar-nama* painted in about 1602, depicting the proclamation of the birth of Salim, the future emperor Jahangīr, executed by two of his court-painters Kesu and Chatar, from the Victorīa and Albert Museum collection, may also be brought to life. So many paintings of the period of Sultan Jahangir, are scattered throughout the world and it will be rather difficult to make any final choice. Ultimately, selections may be made of certain famous and historic paintings for the purpose. Kiosks are to be prepared showing either Jahangir and his retinue visiting Akbar's tomb as Sikandra after the miniature preserved in the Chester Beatty collection, or his thrilling lion-hunt scene preserved in the Indian Museum. Colourful ceremonies of his reign may be reproduced in another kiosk by scrupulously adhering to the masterpiece of Monohar showing a grand processional scene and music party containing a portrait of Tansen preserved in the former State Library of Rampur. The magnīficence of Shah Jahan's court can be easily reconstructed graphically, relying on some of his celebrated Darbar scenes, portraying groups of notables, their faces based on sketches or studies from life, observed with unrivlled accuracy and delicacy. The painting representing Shah Jahan seated in the Diwan-i-khas flanked by his four sons and vizirs, receiving European embassy, including ladies in their period costume which came to Delhi in the 17th century, in the heyday of Mughal greatness, from a Banares collection, is indeed an appropriate subject for reproduction. If possible, the pathetic phase of the emperor's last few years, may be envisaged by giving plastic form to one of the modern masterpieces of Abanindranath Tagore's showing him lying sick and infirm but looking wistfully at the eternal dream in marble, the Taj, across the Jamuna from his reputed place of captivity, the Shamam-burj in Agra fort. Aurangzeb, crafty, cruel and austere may be brought to life from the well-known painting where the stooping old emperor, engrossed in reading the Quran, is going a-hunting in a boat or from the memorable miniature where he is personally conducting the seige against Bijapur. Simultaneously, the resistance of the Hindu against foreign suzerainty is to be personified in the militant Sivaji, riding and leading his Maratha forces from the fort of Pratapgarh. The sustaining strength of Hindu religion, in spite of hundreds of years of Muslim dominancy may also be emphasised by representing groups of ascetics clustering under banyan trees, so familiar in Mughal painting, specially in the remarkable piece from British Museum. All pervasive influence of Jainism in Gujarat and Western India at this age, may be made evident, with the help of Vijnaptipatra scrolls, abundantly found in Jain Bhandars and elsewhere representing the great Vijayasena Suri himself surrounded by his pious congregation of Shravakas.

The innumerable paintings, with a bewildering variety of themes and techniques produced under the patronage of the Indian princes of Rajasthan and the Himalayan States of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries will provide ample basic material for reconstructing typical scenes relating to the social, cultural, religious and pastoral life of the people at large, as a foil agaist the predominantly secular court art of the Mughals.

The introduction of the modern age may be prefaced by Vasco-da-Gama's arrival at Calicut in 1497. It led to far reaching results for the history of India. The European infiltration first as merchants and then as conquerors is to be illustrated through medium of Portugese naval power, the English factory at Surat, Anglo-French rivalry in the Carnatic and finally the battle of Plassey. The rise of the Sikh and Maratha powers and the break up of the Maratha confederacy and the third Battle of Panipath, are then to be dealt with followed by early British life during Warren Hastings, foundation of the Asiatic Society by Sir William Jones and Princeps, some notable acts of British Governor-Generals like Cornwallis and Bentinck specially the Abolition of the Sati, Introduction of English education by Macaulay and Raja Rammohan Roy—Ahalya Bai and the sacred city of Varanasi, Hydar Ali and Tipu Sultan—Ranjit Sing—Unification of India under the British and their Administrative System—Introduction of Railways, Posts and Telegraphs under Dalhousie—Sepoy Mutiny or the First War of Independence—Economic impoverishment of India—Famines—Effects of Industrial Revolution in Europe—Birth of Indian Nationalism—First Indian National Congress—Partition of Bengal—Boycott and Swadeshi—Jallianwallabagh—Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience Movements—Dandi March—Hindu Muslim conflict and then finally the Transfer of Power by the British in 1947 etc. may all be properly prepared and displayed.

Suggesting an outline sketch for the plan of the proposed National Museum of Indian History, the above remarks are meant to elucidate the meaning and import of the Museum and the way in which it can be translated into a concrete shape. Regarding the choice of subjects to be visually demonstrated, there may be some important lacuna, some are to be eliminated, others incorporated. That is a matter of consideration for the Board of Experts whose collaboration with the sponsoring authority and the artists are of utmost importance. It is hoped that the urgent necessity of having a National Museum of Indian History will be realised by people at large and it will be possible for the Central Government, at the sametime, to set up a Museum first at Delhi followed by others at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

CHAPTER : FOUR

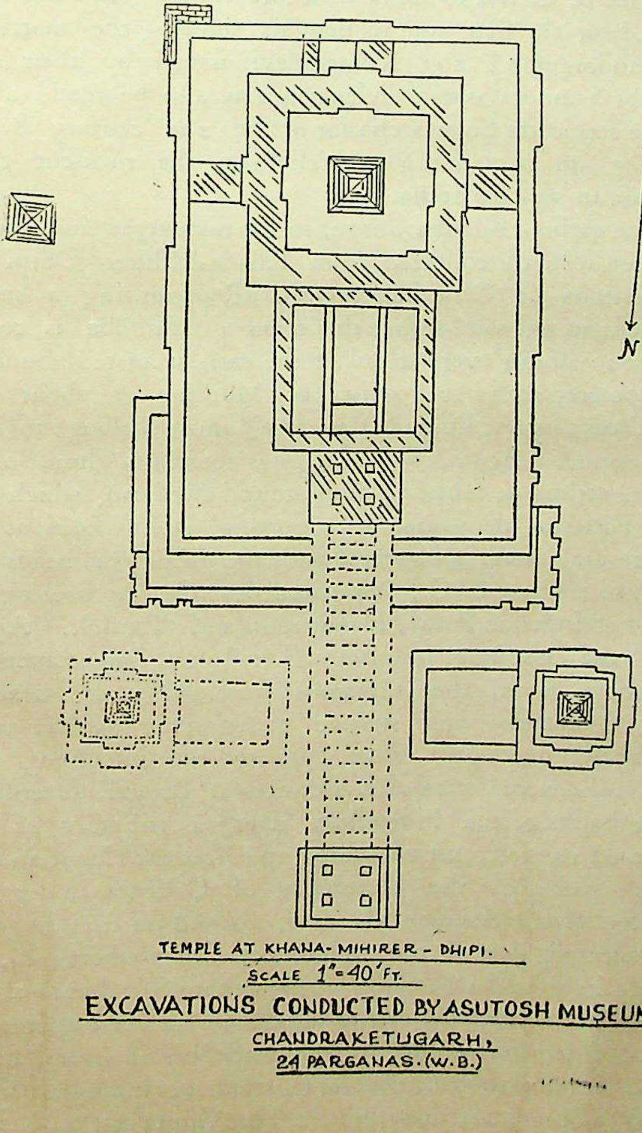
ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES IN LOWER GANGETIC VALLEY

Few people could imagine that Bengal could be as rich in antiquarian treasure as the ancient Aryavarta sites of Mathura, Kausambi and Pataliputra. Pundravardhana or North Bengal was considered, so long, to be the only area where remnants of ancient civilization could be expected. Contrary to popular belief and recorded history, Gangetic lower Bengal, bordering on the sea, was also dotted with numerous cities and ports, about two thousand years ago. This has been clearly revealed by intensive exploration recently carried out by the Asutosh Museum of the University of Calcutta, mainly in the alluvium soil of the district of 24 Parganas, Midnapur and Howrah, in West Bengal. Forming a sort of garland around Calcutta and within a radius of fifty miles or so, the exploration of 1957-58 and following years have been rewarded by the discovery of many more ancient sites, besides half a dozen sites explored in recent past. These discoveries have led to surprising and far reaching results.

The explorations at Tamluk, ancient Tamralipta, one of the greatest and oldest sea ports of South East Asia, which had been carried on continuously for the last few years, led to the discovery of a large variety of terracotta plaques of intriguing character of the Mauryya, Sunga and Kushan period, some depicting Buddhist Jatakas, a peculiar gold coin almost baffling identification and an inscribed seal with seated Devi image of the early Pala period and numerous other cognate finds of fascinating artistic workmanship. Of the four other places in Midnapur district, Tilda, where archaeological excavations were conducted on behalf of the

University of Calcutta in 1955 laying bare Kushan and Gupta structures, yielded from the surface a unique object in the shape of a terracotta tablet inscribed in Greek of about the beginning of the Christian era—a specimen discovered for the first time in India and lately an inscribed Buddha plaque in terracotta of the Gupta period. An almost life size terracotta head of a lady (Fig. 1) of extraordinary beauty and liveliness, also perhaps of the Gupta era, was recovered from Panna along with other fragmentary limbs and an inscribed Gaja-Lakshmi tablet, in the Silavati valley. From Raghunathbari was found a series of terracotta heads having strange affinity with Aztec art of Central America. Belonging to Kushan, Gupta and mediaeval times, terracotta objects and figurines represented by toy-elephants, ram-carts, and potteries have also been found in Bahiri further down the sea coast in Midnapur.

Only 30 miles north-east of Calcutta, explorations at the ancient site of Chandraketugarh near Berachampa, in the district of 24 Parganas, the most important of the sites explored and by far the most extensive, have resulted in the discovery of significant relics which may be assigned to a period between the Mauryya and Gupta Ages. A surface examination of the area which was first visited on behalf of the Asutosh Museum in 1948 and scientifically surveyed later in 1950 revealed the existence of an antiquarian site of about two square miles in area still covered with rolling mounds including traces of a rectangular *garh* or fort surrounded by rampart walls, still rising to a height of thirty feet in some places. Of the relics mention may be made of objects in the shape of one hundred silver puch-marked coins—the earliest coins in circulation in India—several terracotta seals, inscribed with early Brahmi characters of 2nd century B. C. to 1st century A. D. and some intriguing pictographic marks; N. B. P. fragments, portions of rouletted wares and wine vases of probable Roman origin, terracotta figures betraying Hellenistic influence in the folded tunic and sandals, stamped and inscribed sherds of the Kushan period, some Mauryya and innumerable Sunga and Kushan terracotta figurines (Fig. 2) of surpassing loveli-



TEMPLE AT KHANA-MIHIRER-DHIPI.

SCALE 1"=40' FT.

EXCAVATIONS CONDUCTED BY ASUTOSH MUSEUM,

CHANDRAKETUGARH,

24 PARGANAS. (W.B.)

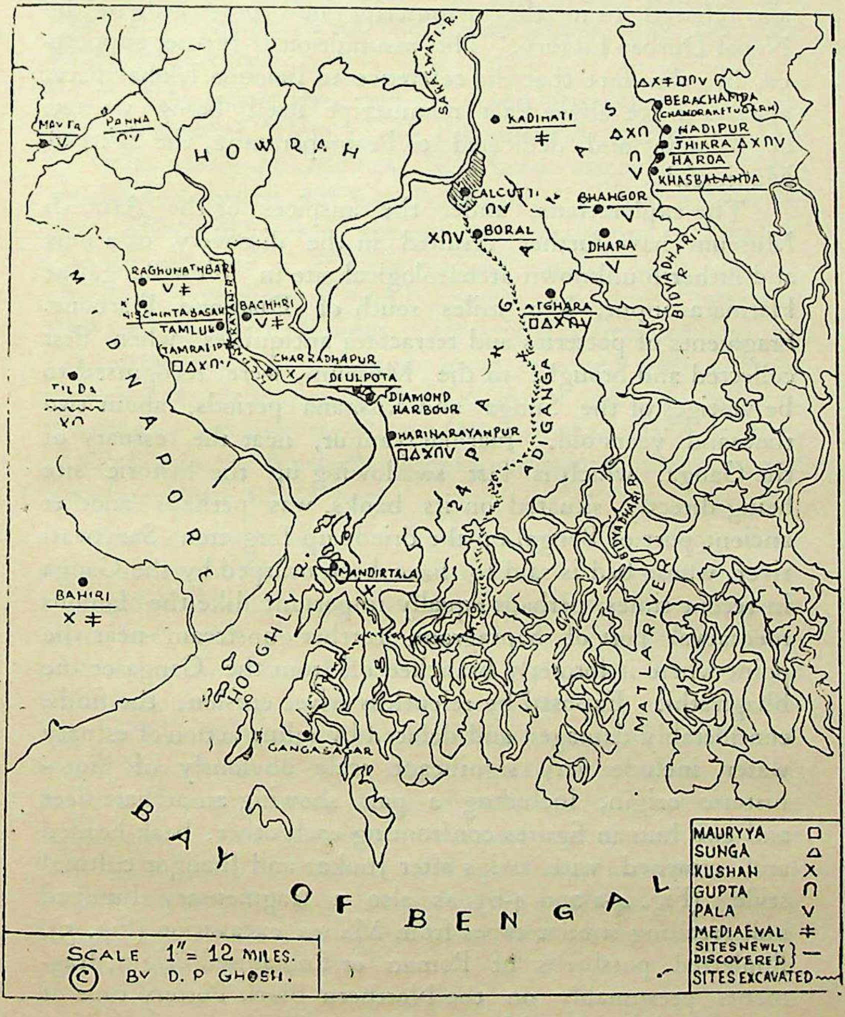
ness besides toy carts dramatically enirsaging a huge *Rakshasa* devouring a crocodile (Fig. 3) and series of winged elephant, ram end horse symbolising the Vedic Trinity—Indra, Agani and Suryya—in a unique manner, series of erotic Mithuna tablets of surprising range made as early as 2nd and 1st centuries B. C. not to speak of a rare Gupta gold coin, discovered for the first time in Bengal, showing the marriage of Chandragupta I and Kumaradevi issued by their son emperor Samudragupta. Mention may also be made of a unique terracotta Suryya chariot of the 2nd century B. C. recalling similar contemporary relief on the rock-cut cave of Bhaja in western India.

The earliest Buddha image, so far discovered in Bengal, has been recently collected from Khana-Mihirer Dhipi in the environs of Chandraketugarh. Representing a small fragment in red sand-stone, the torso of Buddha is reminiscent in almost every detail of the earliest seated Buddha in stone erected by the artists of Mathura at about the second century A. D. and therefore, must belong to the same period. Again, a fascinating terracotta head of a female, attired in fantastic discs around the head, which the ultra Parisian deme-mondes sporting latest fashions in coiffure may envy, is identical with the Mauryya heads of the third century B. C., excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India at Patna, Hastinapur and Tamluk. Apart from the aesthetic beauty and cultural importance of the above finds, the numerous inscribed seals, bearing early characters and strange pictographs, when fully deciphered may give some clue to the intriguing and freshly discovered trace of civilization of Bengal flourishing on the banks of the Bidyadhari river, a tributary of the Ganga on the left, just preceding and after the Christian era.

A party of the University of Calcutta, under the auspices of the Asutosh Museum, carried on trial diggings on a selected part of the mound of Chandraketugarh, for two weeks in March, 1957. This archaeological excavation, which corroborated the earlier data from surface exploration, was rewarded by the find of the evidences of several stages of human habitation of different periods beginning with the Mauryya-Sunga age down to the Post-Gupta period. Even the existence of a pre-Mauryya level is warranted by the finds of peculiar reddish pottery. According to the Report, "the occupation levels of early periods show the signs of Kachcha houses built of wood, bamboo and tiles and mud walls on mud plinth. Evidences of the destruction of the houses by fire in ancient time have also been brought to light. At a comparatively late period brick houses were built and a portion of a pavement of two courses of bricks of such a structure has been exposed in course of the excavation. One of the earliest occupation levels was associated with a drain of pottery pipes (each of which measures 2 ft. 7 in. in length and 8 in. on larger end and 5 in. on smaller and in diameter) east to west. It has been dug out 1 ft. below the present water level (which is about 12 ft. below the surface of the mound). This drain may safely be ascribed to the Mauryya period, as high class N.B.P. sherds with a metallic sound generally found during the Mauryya and pre-Mauryya period in other ancient sites of Northern India, have also been discovered here. Another very interesting but partial discovery of a ramp like structure of rammed concrete gradually sloping from east to west has been unearthed from a low level (8-9 ft.) in one part of the excavated area. This was probably adopted by the early inhabitants of this part of Bengal as a protective measure against the onrush of tidal waves or flood water. Later on, a stupendous rampart wall of mud was constructed on this peculiar ramp for the defence of the city against man and nature".

Among the minor excavated antiquities mention may be made of a few copper cast coins in a corroded condition, one bearing 'crescent on Chaitya' symbol on the obverse, beads of various stones and terracotta of different shapes and sizes, a fragmentary pottery spout shaped like a Makara with traces of slip, N. B. P. sherds stamped with the design of wheel, star, sun and lotus, a copper antimony stick, fragmentary dishes of grey and black pottery and fine fabric, utensils of pottery consisting of pieces of cups, pans, spouted vases and pots for kitchen and other domestic purposes and by far the most interesting objects of the excavation in the form of a number of fragmentary black pottery cups with spouts, sometimes with peculiar bands of rouletted pattern apparently of foreign origin.

The above finds at Chandraketugarh, situated on the river Bidyadhari, once a large and important branch of the Bhagirathi on the left, whose silted up bed now being used as an outlet of Calcutta sewage and storm-water, point to the existence of a flourishing international port rivalling the ancient port of Tamralipta (Tamluk) on the Rupnarayana river, a tributary on the right bank of the Bhagirathi (Ganga). The importance of the Bidyadhari channel as an ancient maritime route flanked by cities, temples and monastries, is suppored by further explorations carried on under the auspices of the Museum, downstream at Khas Balanda, seven or eight miles south of Berachampa, marked with the ruins of a recently discovered Gupta stone temple converted into a mosque and at Dhara further down, studded with several mounds wehich have yielded Pala potteris. Dhara situated in the neighbourhood of Khhas Balanda and within Balanda Pargana itself, can now be identified with some amount of plausibility, with the Buddhist Vihara Balanda mentioned in a Nepalese manuscript, but the location of which in Bengal remained so far a mystery. Apart from the clue of the original site of Balanda Vihara, as furnishd definitely by modern survivals of the name in this particular area of deltaic Bengal, the recent reclamation by the Museum of several fragments of a large image, originally recovered intact from a tank, which was being gradually disintegrated and swallowed up by a banyan tree at Bhangor, a couple of miles from Dhara and only 12 miles east of Calcutta, leave little doubt about the identification suggested. Joined together, these fragments yielded a magnificent standing image of Bodhisattva Manjusri (3½ ft. high) in black basalt of about the 11th century A.D. There is every likelihood, according to the present writer, of this Manjusri (Fig, 6) being the presiding deity of Balanda Mahavihara similar to the image of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, who occupied an identical position in the Jagaddal Mahavihara, a famous Buddhist University in North Bengal


MAVTA
V
PANNA
∩V
HOWRAH
SARASWATI R.
KADIMATI
ǂ
△×ǂ□∩V
BERACHAMPA
(CHANDRAKETUGARH)
HADIPUR
JHIKRA △×∩V
HAROA
KHASBALANDA
△×∩
∩
V
CALCUTTA
∩V
BHANGOR
V
×∩V
BORAL
DHARA
V
MIDNAPORE
RAGHUNATHBARI
V ǂ
NISCHINTABASAN
TAMLUK
TAMRALIPTA
□△×∩V
RUPNARAYAN R.
BACHHRI
V ǂ
ATGHARA
□△×∩V
CHAR RADHAPUR
×
DEULPOTA
DIAMOND HARBOUR
TILDA
×∩
HARINARAYANPUR
□△×∩V
24 PARGANAS
ADI GANGA
BIDYADHARI R.
BIDYADHARI R.
MATLA RIVER
HOOGHLY R.
MANDIRTALA
×
BAHIRI
× ǂ
GANGASAGAR
BAY OF BENGAL
SCALE 1" = 12 MILES.
© BY D. P GHOSH.
MAURYYA □
SUNGA △
KUSHAN ×
GUPTA ∩
PALA V
MEDIAEVAL ǂ
SITES NEWLY DISCOVERED } —
SITES EXCAVATED ~~~

Map showing Archaeological Sites explored by the Asutosh Museum.

also referred to in the manuscript now preserved in the Nepal Durbar Library. This assumption is further supported by the fact that the reference to Balanda Mahavihara, appears in the above Pala manuscript itself being written at Balanda and dedicated to Prajnaparamita, the Sakti of Manjusri.[1]

The explorations, under the auspices of the Asutosh Museum have further resulted in the discovery of a new and hitherto unknown archaeological site in West Bengal at Harinarayanpur, four miles south of Diamond Harbour. Fragments of potteries and terracotta antiquities when first collected and brought to the Museum, were recognised to be vestiges of the Sunga and Kushana periods, about two thousand years old. Harinarayanpur, near the estuary of the Ganga, which is fast swallowing up the historic site being directly situated on its banks, was perhaps another ancient port of Bengal on the dried up forgotten Saraswati river, whose bed is said to have been usurped by the Ganga in recent times, perhaps equally important like the famous mediaeval port of Saptagram, further upstream near the point where it formerly branched off from the Ganga or the Bhagirathi. Exposed by relentless river erosion, the finds, considerably damaged and defaced by saline action of estuary water, include very significant scale obviously of proto-historic origin, including a pair showing an archaic deer and two human figures confronting each other, beak-headed and crowned with twigs after Jhukar and Jhangor cultural style (Fig. 4-a and 4-b) as also a fragmentary humped bull recalling similar types from Malwa excavation (Fig. 5). Rouletted potsherds of Roman or Romanised origin, fragments presumably on the Northern Black Pottery type of Mauryya and post-Mauryya era and other pottery wares stamped with beautiful strings of lotus rosettes have also been discovered. Mention may also be made of Sunga terracotta figurines of *Yaksinis*, almost similar to those at Tamluk and Chandraketugarh and a hoard of the familiar uninscribed copper cast-coins of the early period including two with rare designs of a camel and a ship, multiple early beads and a couple of terracotta seals which may turn out to be pre-historic.

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[1] Haraprasad Sastri, Bangiya Sahitya Parisat Patrika, 1321, B. S. p. 292.

A few years ago, another pre-Christian site Atghara in 24-Parganas, close to the bed of the Adiganga and only 12 miles south of Calcutta, has been discovered. It has further emphasised the hoary antiquity of the Sundarban area. The collection of antiquities is analogous to Tamluk, Chandraketugarh, Harinarayanpur and other places. Unknown varieties of round copper cast coins, terracotta seals and *Yaksinis*, besides a terracotta relief envisaging a warrior of great dignity and poise stamped with obvious influence of Hellenistic technique in the graceful folds of the drapery as also significant fragments of early pottery of the Sunga and Kushana period including typical rouletted ware have been found here.

All the archaeological and artistic evidences from these series of explorations and excavations not only add to our knowledge of known types of art and architecture of ancient India but open up a new and hitherto unknown vista of the culture and civilisation of ancient Bengal, two thousand years ago and more and specially the way of life of the Bengalees in this forlorn part of the delta, which has now come to be known as the Sundarban. Also for the first time some of the antiquities, for the first time, significantly point to a brisk maritime intercourse between the coast land of Bengal and contemporary Roman and Hellenistic world and to the probable existence of ancient foreign settlements like those discovered on the eastern and western coast of India.[2]

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[2] Further, the excavations continued during the last ten years between 1957-67, have revealed the extent of the cultural progress which Chandraketugarh had made in the past. The most important of them, are of course. the extensive ruins of an early Gupta brick temple covering an area of about 300 ft. x 100 ft. and resembling the Parvati temple at Nachna Kutara in Central India at Khana-Mihirer-Dhipi (See inset plan). They are situated almost centrally at the old city site encircled by a huge mud-rampart of about the Ist century B. C. protecting an area of about four square miles. Having a square ground plan, the temple with Triratha projections, consists of sanctum cella (65 ft.x65 ft) centred by a deep offsetted pit, unique in India, a vestibule of 45 ft.x45 ft.

with a pillard porch in front, from where a flight of 20 steps ended in a pillard Mandapa. The temple faces north, flanked on each side by miniature replicas of the temple itself. It was once embellished with decorated bricks and stuccoed lotus string moulding and shallow niches, now empty. The entire temple complex, which appear to have been vigorously extended and rebuilt in the Post-Gupta epochs on three occasions, is thus a new architectural discovery in Eastern India, recalling such remains at Nalanda and Rajgir.

Moreover, the Asutosh Museum has been, immeasurably enriched during the last ten years, by a continuous flow of countless antiquities, through excavations and explorations, specially from Chandraketugarh and environs, as well as from Harinarayanpur, in the shape of varieties of terracotta figurines and plaques of unique importance, pottery fabrics, jewelleries of precious and semi-precious stones, ivory objects and early coinage ranging from the Mauryya to Pala times. Already from the find of terracotta objects, Chandraketugarh appears to be a veritable mine as rich as Mathura, Ahichchhatra, Kausambi and Pataliputra—and yet much remains to be done.

CHAPTER : FIVE

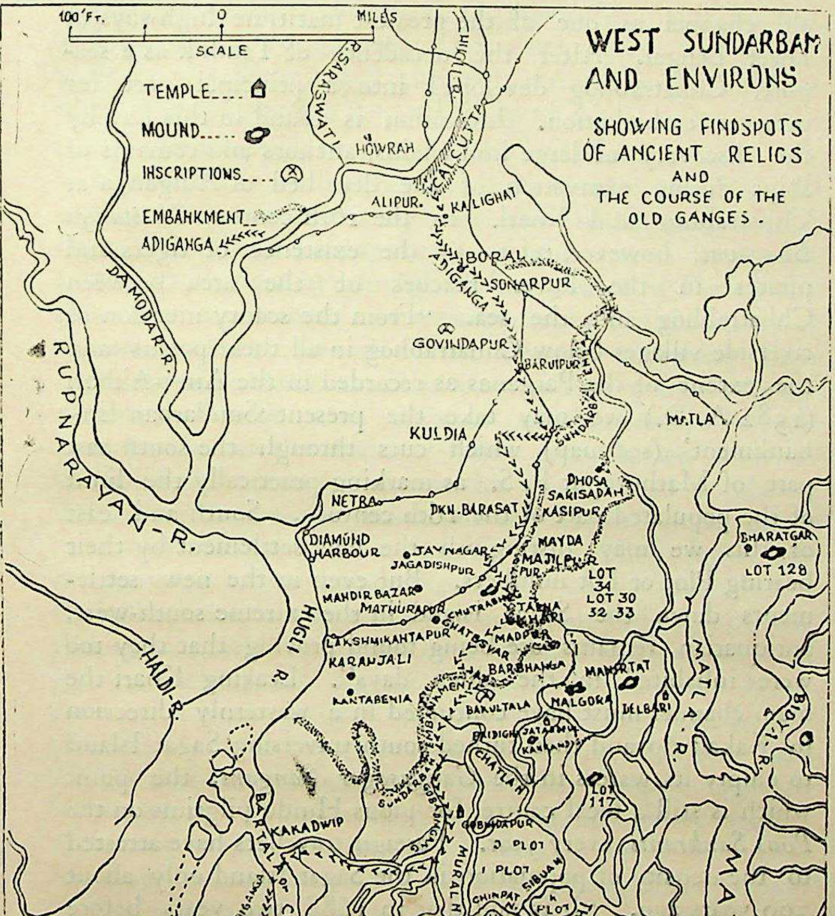
HIDDEN TREASURES OF SUNDARBAN

It is said that the site of Calcutta itself, once formed part of Sundarban. Barges laden with the beautiful red faggots of *Sundari* trees lining the Beliaghata Canal in the northern outskirts and Sundarban honey occasionally advertised for sale by the West Bengal Government only serve to bring home to the city dwellers now, the close proximity of this vast hinterland. Otherwise Sundarban conjures up in our mind a no-man's land whose wild solitude is disturbed occasionally by the plaintive bark of a deer or the terrific roar of a royal Bengal tiger. Unwary hunters or wood cutters who venture to penetrate the dense forests, often fall a prey to pythons, tigers or crocodiles. That is modern Sundarban, wild, desolate, wrapped in mysterious legends. So near Calcutta yet so inaecessible. This is largely due to the peculiar deltaic cobweb pattern of isles and islets intersected by innumerable saline creeks and vast tidal estuaries of the Ganga.

One would scarcely believe that uptil the 12th century, the entire area, at least the western part of it, was the centre of a flourishing civilization and peopled with large towns, ports, temples and monasteries on both banks of the original course of the Ganga which it has lately discarded in favour of the modern channel of the Hoogli. So once again, we are confronted with the significant riverine pattern repeating itself over and over again from age to age and from one locality to another throughout the course of Indian history. We find the civilisation of a particular zone and the texture of its history fully conditioned and moulded by the whims and vagaries of the large rivers of

India—its vital life lines. The nourishing waters of the Indus and the Ganga sustained the glory of Mohenjo-daro and Hastinapur, Pataliputra and Gaur. They gradually withered and vanished when the river courses chose to desert them altogether or overwhelm with flood waters. Sundarban provides us with another such forgotten chapter of Indian history. Coins and inscriptions, large numbers of images and sculptures—Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain—in stone, terracotta and bronze, beginning from the Kushana and Gupta periods, representing some of the outstanding examples of Indian art and antiquity of unique variety have been discovered in the process of reclamation of forests, excavation of tanks and construction of embankments, largely within a span of last seventy years. Ruins of human habitations and temples including *Jatar Deul*, the loftiest in Bengal, at least one thousand years old—scattered throughout the area, often amidst impenetrable jungle and swamp, still testify to the glory that was Sundarban. Reclamation work of the southern part of the district of 24-Parganas in West Bengal, forming the western portion of Sundarban had been started since the eighties of the 18th century leading to the revelation of many antiquarian remains. The prosperity of this region was undoubtedly caused by the main course of the Ganga flowing through it, in a southernly direction from Calcutta, past Kalighat, Baruipur, Jaynagar-Majilpur and Chhatrabhog thence forward to the sea through innumerable winding channels into which it spilt up including the estuary of the Satamukhi. This corroborated by contemporary Bengali poetical compositions viz. *Chaitanya Bhagavat* of Vrindavandas, *Chandimangala* of Kavi-Kankan Mukundarama and *Raymangala* of Krishnarama even in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Apart from the fact that Sri Chaitanya himself went down this route from Santipur to Orissa, during his pilgrimage to Puri, the frequent literary references of merchants like Chandsadagar, Dhanapati and Srimanta sailing up and down this particular portion of the Bhagirathi to and from Ceylon testify to the importance of this


WEST SUNDARBAN AND ENVIRONS
SHOWING FINDSPOTS OF ANCIENT RELICS AND THE COURSE OF THE OLD GANGES.
100'FT.
0
MILES
SCALE
TEMPLE
MOUND
INSCRIPTIONS
EMBANKMENT
ADIGANGA
R. SARASWATI
HUGLI R.
HOWRAH
CALCUTTA
ALIPUR.
KALIGHAT
BORAL
SONARPUR
ADIGANGA
DAMODAR-R.
RUPNARAYAN-R.
GOVINDAPUR
BARUIPUR
SUNDARBAN
MATLA
KULDIA
DHOSA
SARISADAH
KASIPUR
NETRA
DKN. BARASAT
DIAMOND HARBOUR
JAYNAGAR
JAGADISHPUR
MAYDA
MAJILPUR
LOT 34
LOT 30
32 33
BHARATGAR
LOT 128
MANDIR BAZAR
MATHURAPUR
CHUTABHOG
TARNA
KHARI
GHATESVAR
MADDUR
LAKSHMIKANTAPUR
KARANJALI
KANTABENIA
BARBHANGA
MANIRTAT
NALGORA
DELBARI
BARULTALA
EMBANKMENT
HUGLI R.
HALDI-R.
MATLA-R.
BIDYA-R.
BRIDIGHI
JATAR DEUL
KANKANDIGHI
CHATLAH
LOT 117
SUNDARBAN
GOBADIA
KAKADWIP
BARTALA
GOBINDAPUR
D PLOT
I PLOT
MURALI R.
SIBUA R.
CHINPAT N.
K PLOT
H PLOT
BONSHYAMNAGAR
THAKURANI R.
MATLA-R
ADIGANGA
CHANNEL CREEK
BIRCHAR
E PLOT
PATHARPRATIMA
RAKSASKHALI
L PLOT
D PLOT
C PLOT
F PLOT
A PLOT
SATAMUKHI R.
BURIRTAT
UTTAR SURENDRA-GUNJ
PLOT B
GANGASAGAR
BAY OF BENGAL

Archaeological Map of West Sundarban and Environs.

old channel as one of the greatest maritime highways of lower Bengal. After the decadence of Tamluk as a seaport, Chhatrabhog developed into a principal port for overseas embarkation. Indication is found to this day by the discovery of large iron chains, anchors and remains of ships during excavation of the dry bed of Adiganga at Chhatrabhog and Khari. In the 16th century *Chaitanya Bhagavat*, however, refers to the existence of tigers and pirates in the lower reaches of the area between Chhatrabhog and the sea. "From the scanty mention of riverside villages below Chhatrabhog in all these poems and the extent of the Parganas as recorded in the Ain-i-Akbari (1582 A. D.) we may take the present 'Sundarban Embankment' (see map) which cuts through the south east part of Mathurapur P. S. as marking practically the limit of the populated part of the 16th century. South and east of this we may distinguish the new settlement by their bearing Plot or Lot numbers. But even in the new settlements down the Sagar Island in the extreme south-west, antiquarian remains are being found proving that they too were inhabited in the olden days". Leaving Khari the main channel must have continued in a westernly direction to Kakadwip and then turned south traversing Sagar Island to empty its waters in the *Gangasagar Sangam*, the point which is still a focal centre, for pious Hindu pilgrims on the *Pous Sankranti*, every year. Foreign travellers have attested to the density of population in the Sagar Island only about 300 years ago. "It is said that in 1688, two years before the foundation of Calcutta, 200,000 persons were swept off this Island by a cyclone in one night".[1] In the 1867 earthquake the sea washed away the huge stone image of Kapila housed in a large temple to commemorate the spot where Kapila Muni in his wrath burnt King Sagar's 60,000 sons to ashes and to redeem whom Bhagiratha, Sagar's grandson brought down the Ganga from heaven. From the early 19th century reclamation work started in Sagar, have led to the discovery of remains of ancient brick-built houses, temples, wells, tanks etc. besides Jaina and Vishnu images in stone. It is quite likely that the excellent stone image of Ganga, of about the 12th century A. D. preserved in the Yasoresvari Temple at Jessore was transported there from Sagar, probably by Pratapaditya himself, one of the Barabhuinya chieftains of Bengal who faught against Akbar.

Gradual deterioration of the old course of the Ganga due to silting up of the bed which had already started in the 16th-17th century, probably caused by seismic disturbances, led to the ultimate depopulation of the tract. This was further accelerated by the depredations caused by Portuguese pirates, who proved to be a veritable terror to inhabitants of the entire coastal area of deltaic Bengal, stretching from Sagar Island to Arakan. It is recorded that several helpless victims used to be sewn together simultaneously through their palms, like the 'Hali' of fishes and thrown down in the haulk of pirate ships, to be sold abroad as slaves. Successive Mughal Governors of the Subah Bengal failed to subdue them until at last Emperor Shah Jahan was compelled to send a strong expedition which succeeded in controlling the menace. The naval superiority of the Portugese is well illustrated by a faithful representation of galley or fully armed man of war in a contemporary terracotta panel from the brick temple of Naldanga, Dt. Jessore (East Pakistan) of the 16th-17th century. It is also well known that Pratapaditya employed such galleys, manned by Portugese admirals in maintaining his power against Akbar for a time. Portugese are also credited in having established trade marts along the lower reaches of the Ganga. But although the river has since changed its course, the old bed which has completely dried up can be easily traced from the *Adiganga* (Tolly's Nullah) at Kalighat as far as Khari. Hindus continue to hold this stretch of the old bed in great sanctity. They still burn their dead along its banks, lined on either side by series of ruined brick temples two to three hundred years old. Even now tanks excavated along this bed, known as *Ghosh Ganga*, *Bose Ganga* and *Mitra Ganga* are held no less sacred than Ganga itself.

Attention may also be drawn to the remarkable fact that no devout Hindu would care to burn their dead, nor bathe in the stretch of the modern course of the Bhagirathi, known as the Hoogli, between Khidirpur and Kakadwip whose waters are considered profane; and the banks on both sides are also devoid of any temples. Even to this day, this portion of the river is known to the local people as the channel of the Saraswati. This conclusively proves that the sacred river has lately chosen to forsake its ancient course in favour of one further westward. Originally, a large navigable river now completely decadent, Saraswati, after branching off from Bhagirathi at Tribeni, used to flow due southward to the sea, along the present course of the Hoogli via Sankrail in the Howrah district, reinforced by the waters of the Damodar and the Rupnarayan. In the 17th century, however, the silting up of the Saraswati and the consequent decline of the prosperous port of Saptagram on its banks, seat of the Muslim rulers of Bengal, forced the Portugese to discard it as their principal trade mart and lay the foundation of the port of Hoogli on the Ganga. According to tradition, subsequent to the growth of Hoogli as a great port, and to facilitate the passage of large ocean going vessels up the stream, a canal was excavated by either the Portugese or the officers of Nawab Ali Vardi Khan, the Mughal Viceroy, perhaps at the instance of the British merchants, between Khidirpore, just south of Calcutta and Sankrail, thus joining the Ganga with the Saraswati. Uptil the 16th century both the rivers entered the sea by independent channels as attested by Ain-i-Akbari, although De Barros in his map drawn in 1520, shows the Calcutta-Sankrail channel. Thenceforward the waters of the Ganga rushed along this shorter route, gradually converted the channel below Calcutta to its present wide expanse, usurped the old course of the Saraswati and so became the modern Hoogli estuary. The absence of any water-way to admit passage of sea-worthy vessels upstream is also proved by the chronicles of the Italian traveller Caesar Frederick (1563-1581) narrating that the Portugese merchants of those days used to disembark their merchandise at Garden Reach far below Calcutta, to be ferried across the great emporium of Betor, (ancient 'Betadda-Chaturaka' of Paschima-Khatika of Vardhamanabhukti referred to in the copper plate grant of

King Lakshamana Sena in the 12th century A.D. discovered in Govindapur, a village in southern 24-Parganas) on the opposite bank of the river in the Howrah district and thence transported overland or by barges to Saptagram. Modernity of the present Hoogli channel is also noted by Bishop Heber in his 'Narrative of a journey through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay (1824-25)." "To the South", he observes, "a branch of the Hooghli flows into the Sundarbans, it is called by the Europeans, Tolly's Nullah, but the natives regard it as true Ganga, the wide stream being as they pretend, the work of human and impious hands, at some early period of their history. In consequence no person worships the river between Kidderpur and the sea, while the insignificant ditch enjoys all the same divine honours which the Ganges and the Hooghly river enjoy at the earlier parts of their course".

To Sri Kalidas Dutt, scholarly zaminder of Majilpur we are indebted for the present state of our knowledge about the antiquity of Sundarban. The results of the archaeological researches personally conducted by him in Sundarban which have illumined a dark forgotten corner of Indian history, have been published in the Varendra Research Society's Monograph Nos. 3, 4 and 5 and also in some other periodicals. Some remarkable examples of Indian sculpture of the early and late mediaeval period besides coins of Huviska and Skanda Gupta, collected by him from this area are now preserved in the Asutosh Museum (Fig. 9.). My personal exploration in certain parts of the same region too also yielded at least one unique ancient Indian record in the shape of a dated copper-plate grant, collected for the Museum, certain terracotta figurines, male and female, discovered in the Sagar Island, in the late Kushan or early Gupta style (circa 2nd-4th century A.D.) prove the hoary antiquity of Sundarban in a conclusive way. The heads show a naivity of expression, freedom of handling, characteristic of such terracottas from Patna, Mathura and Ahichchhatra of the same period. One of the heads with prominent coiffure is identical in technique and style with a terracotta head recently secured from Tamluk for the Asutosh Museum. One of the finest Suryya images of the Gupta or post-Gupta era has been found at Kasipur betraying profound feeling for plastic masses in the supple summary treatment of the rounded limbs. A distinguishing feature of the image, a rare and early variety from Bengal, is the calm complascent attitude of the divinity devoid of later rigidity and conventional formula. Few other examples of the same period have been discovered in several other localities, including a unique terracotta concical figure in the form of a tree, clasped by a female devotee, laid bare by river erosion of the *Satamukhi* in Burartat (G. Plot) close to the sea. Remains of Gupta brick temples have been excavated at Dakshin Govindapur (Plot No. 114) revealing a facetted Śiva-linga in sandstone about 3 ft. high which is now preserved in Kantabenia, a neighbouring village. In shape and material this linga is affiliated to similar Gupta lingas found in Upper India. From the shrine again, a striking image of Siva Nataraja dancing on his bull, belonging to about the 11th century A. D. has been unearthed. Although it cannot claim for itself aesthetic excellence of a very high order, its importance lies in the rarity of such images in Bengal.

Early Pala art of the 8th century is illustrated by certain small rectangular plaques in black slate showing standing Vishnus, almost primitive in vigour and two dimensional in form, discovered in Boral, just near Calcutta and Khari. Two specimens of stone images of *Ananta Narayana* from Lot No. 10 iconographically peculiar and *Uma Mahesvara* are representatives of the style of this and the subsequent century. Sundarban has also yielded some pieces of stone sculptures which indeed do credit to the genius of the Pala artists. Fashioned in the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. they include a dancing Ganesa, a Saraswati, an Adinath, and a Sudarsana Chakra. Evidently belonging to the 10th century, the dancing Ganesa from Mayda is outstanding for the dynamic movement of soft and supple body, rhythmically arranged and economically rendered. From Sarisadaha comes the unique representation of Vishnu Nataraja (Fig. 8.) dancing on his Vahana Garuda, inset within a double sided Sudarsana Chakra. Siva as Nataraja is too familiar specially in South India but no other parallel to this peculiar image has been found anywhere else in India. This *Chakra-dvaja*, embellished with the ecstatic dancing figure keeping time with clapping hands must have stood in front of a Vishnu temple since destroyed. Notable for a sensuous body singularly graceful, the pliant figure of Sarasvati holding the Vina in her hand, hails from Lot No. 28 (Fig. 9.). As stated previously a large number of Jaina and Buddhist images in stone and metal have also been discovered in Sundarban area along with Brahmanical deities showing the popularity of all the three cults in the region. A dignified large figure of Adinath, the first Jaina Tirthankara, bold and vigorous, recovered from *Ghatesvara* is indeed the most striking of all the Jain images. No less important is the headless torso of Vishnu from Khari, firmly handled, tastefully decorated and majestically conceived. Lacking the flowing rhythm of Saraswati, but still endowed with a beauty and poise quite its own enhanced by a skillful appreciation of the jewellery, the Lakshmi from Krisnachandrapur is indeed an outstanding product of the 11th century Sena art. From the inaccessible region of Patharpratima—a significant place name—comes the bronze figure of Buddha, seated in the Bhumisparsa Mudra, perhaps also a Sena product. Betraying a close kinship with the contemporary metal Buddhas from Chittagong, in East Pakistan, such Pala-Sena prototypes must have influenced contemporary Burmese and Siamese Buddhist images.

But perhaps the most important graphic record of Indian antiquity thrown up by the Sundarban is provided by the engraved copper-plate grant of Dommanapala, discovered by the author in course of digging a mound in dense jungle in Rakshaskhali (F. Plot). The inscription dated 1198 A.D. written in proto-Bengali characters on one side lined with a thin layer of silver, refers to Purva-Khatika Mandala (Khari). A remarkable engraving, also unique in India, appears on the other representing Vishnu seated on a chariot with a devotee in front (Fig. 10.). It has now been accepted by scholars that this style of graphic art of Bengal palpably influenced the development of schools of painting in contemporary and late mediaeval Burma, Siam, Java and Indo-China.[2]

Of the several monuments hidden in the jungle fastnesses of Sundarban, some in a state of utter dilapidation, some going back to the Gupta age, undoubtedly the most important is the Jatar Deul in Lot No. 116. Built in brick, its contour irrevocably altered in course of restoration by the zamindar in whose land it stands, it now dominates the entire landscape with the spire about 100 ft. above the ground level, the highest in Bengal. Similar in structure and decoration to the Siddhesvara temple in Bankura, it was presumably built in the 10th century A.D. This is supported by the unearthing of another copper-plate, now lost, near the temple, which refers to the erection of the temple by King Jayantachandra Deva in 975 A.D. Yet other brick temple of the same age, of similar planning and construction, now in ruins still survive about 35 ft. high in H. Plot, standing like a mirage amidst encircling forest and swamps.[3]

NOTES

1 Imperial Gazetteer, Calcutta, Vol. XII, p. 110.

2 D. P. Ghosh—A Copper Plate Inscription. Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Vol. II, Pt. I, 1934 pp. 127-29.

3 It may be added here that two successive exploration parties from the Asutosh Museum and the Department of Museology, Calcutta University, in the Winter of 1965 and 1966 consisting of Lecturers, Research Scholars and students, intensively explored the coastal area of Burartat in G. Plot just bordering the Bay of Bengal. It is indeed a matter of gratification that they succeeded in examining three ancient mounds in the area and several Gupta and Pala brick structures exposed through erosion, and collected for the Asutosh Museum from the region, Sunga terracotta figures, human as well as animals, resembling known types from Chandraketugarh, Tamluk and elsewhere ; Kushana, Gupta and Pala potteries, early beads and lastly a very well preserved gold coin of Chandragupta II, besides fragments of stone images of Sahasralinga etc. of C. 11th century A.D.

From these, it is now quite evident that the explored area supposed to be forlon and reclaimed from dense jungle only a few years ago, was under human occupation from at least the Sunga to the Pala-Sena period.

CHAPTER : SIX

A SURVEY OF ORISSAN ARTS AND CRAFTS

Art is the reflection of a nation's soul. In ancient India art was integrated with life and all its manifestations. Unlike modern India it was not divorced from everyday activity, to be enjoyed by the sophisticated only at exhibitions and evaluated by connoisseurs in the rare art collections of wealthy patrons.

Fortunately for us in the rural areas of India, art is a living reality even to this day. Except for the northern part of the country, where centuries of Muslim rule had perhaps damped the artistic ardour of the people, traditional Indian art has managed to survive in southern or peninsular India. Folk arts of Orissa are an alienable factor of its myriad villages. This is reflected in the colourful paintings on the humble mud huts of interior villages mostly devoted to religious subjects and auspicious symbol designed to ward off all ill-omens. Even ten years ago, the streets and lanes of Puri used to be enlivened by rows of buildings, whose walls were resplendent with paintings with a sense of vital form and feeling for organisation. But alas, with the intrusion of modern fashions and fancies, these significant imageries no longer play an integral part in the life of Orissa inhabitants. Consequently, the murals are not only not renovated as they used to be done regularly in the past, but all their traces are being wiped out by careful white-washing.

Though ritual and magic symbolism is gradually losing their inherent values, the aesthetic consciousness of the ordinary mass of Orissa expresses itself in artistic objects replete with folk imagination and conception, viz. dolls and toys, soapstone-carvings, wooden vessels, playing cards, clay images and finally the 'Pats' for which Orissa is deservedly famous.

The art of ancient Indian stone carving reached, no doubt, its climax in Orissa. This is envisaged by the remarkable sculptures of Bhubaneswar, Konarak, Khiching and Mahendragiri. The descendants of the artists who built those famous temples and adorned them with statuary of such surpassing loveliness and beauty can still reproduce the same sense of matchless form and plastic vitality in soapstone figures of amazing variety and pose. Similarly the sense of colour and design powerfully revealing a bewildering sense of intricate movement is skillfully embodied in the 'Pats' and 'Patas', 'Ganjifas' and 'Faruas'.

A set of soapstone Nayikas, now preserved in the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, has captured the cadence of dance with consumate skill (Fig. 11). Exquisitely carved nymphs are shown swaying rhythmically to the measured tune of cymbals and drum. Poised on lotus pedestals, the balance and harmony of modelled limbs, recall the sensuous grace and animation of their prototypes—the far famed Nayikas of ancient Konarak. A clay image of Mahisasuramardini from Puri also in the Museum is conspicuous for its bold modelling and dynamic vitality. In contrast to the ferocious mein of the demon, the expression of Durga is full of '*Karuna*' as she is striving to release the Asura from its demoniac existence. An amazing 'Pat' in the shape of Kandarparatha, is ingeniously composed of Gopis in varying poses, supporting and framing a seated figure of Krishna. Lastly, three beautifully shaped wooden caskets from Khandpara, are painted with bands of floral patterns and Krishnalila scenes vibrating with warm colours and significant designs.

During the early decade of the present century, folk art of Orissa, specially soap-stone-carving, continued to decline at an alarming rate, although there was some demand for miniature Jagannatha Pats in the pilgrim town of Puri or Jagannatha Khsetra. Around 1928, the famous artist Nandalal Bose bewailed that there were only eighteen families of "*Pathurias*" ("*Prastarakaras*" or stone masons corresponding to the present "*Salats*" or "*Silavats*" of

Gujarat) in the Pathuriasahi (a quarter specially inhabited by the particular class of artists) in Puri; the number was little better in the *Chitrakarasahi* (a quarter specially inhabited by *Chitrakaras* or painters). Within ten years, in 1937, when I started my survey of Orissan arts and crafts, I was dismayed to find that the number of living craftsmen including 'Pathurias' had dwindled to eight only corresponded by an average decline in the number of Chitrakara families in Puri town as well as the villages of Damodarpur and Raghurajpur in Puri district, Khallikote in Ganjam district and some scatterred families in Khandpara and the then Garhjat States of Nayagarh and Ranpur. I was told that want of patronage had driven the sons and grandsons of master craftsmen to turn into ordinary masons or had otherwise forshaken the noble profession of their forefathers.

Shocked by the dismal situation, I resolved in all humility to devote my limited energies in revitalizing the dying artistic tradition, which still mirrored the sensitive flavour of the past. For twenty years, from 1937 to 1956, I was preoccupied in carrying on field survey of the living arts, mainly restricted to the coastal districts and neighbouring native states, collection of antiquities and objects of art envisaging some of the rarest and most fascinating aspects of Orissan heritage and lastly in trying to infuse new life in the dying embers of folk traditions. It was customery for me to visit Orissa, every two years or so and spend the Puja Vacation roaming about the country side, visiting historical sites and doing some archaeological exploration, specially in Sisupalgarh, besides studying the evolution of ancient monuments of the land. In course of time, I gathered around myself a group of four master *Pathurias* led by Krishna Maharana and Bhuban Mahapatra and three *Chitrakaras* including the masters Rama and Raghu Maharana in Puri, whom I had the privilege to train in producing better designs and forms, specially relating to sculpture and architecture, through personal direction and by supplying sketches and photographs of classical specimens. Gradually the artists were able to produce instead of crude disappointing works, scale models in stone and soapstone, of the famous temples of Konarak, Lingaraja etc. based upon specifications and measurements of the temples themselves, in addition to the *Silpa Sastras*, carefully worked out by myself. Not only that, this group of *Pathurias*, would sometime come down to Calcutta at my request, stay for a couple of months in my home and carry out some outside orders, mainly miniature shrines with faithful details, working day and night under my supervision. In this way, watching with fascination the deft handling of the brush or the chisel, I could enjoy some of the best years of my life, in association with those talented master-artists, highlighted by unforgettable moments of sustained joy and bliss. In course of time more young men joined, more government orders and orders from institutions other than the Asutosh Museum poured in. After Independence encouragement came with the establishment of All India Handicrafts Board and State Emporiums; public taste changed, tourist demand increased and modern Orissan arts and crafts are now good dollar earners.[1] Thirty years ago, traditional artists had been wallowing in grim poverty, full of inmeasurable pathos in their eyes. In 1937 they had been earning only eight annas a day but now I am happy to record that their daily average earning range from five to ten rupees. In spite of these increasing signs of recognition and economic rehabilitation, I must say that the so-called modernisation in design and colour in Orissan traditional art, today, is not at all a healthy sign.

Some observations may be made here about the technique which the Utkal craftsman still adheres to but would like to keep carefully secret to himself. What surprised me very much was that, just like his forefathers of Mahenjodaro and Harappa, the sculptor directly attacked his slab with the chisel, without making any preliminary drawing, in company with his painter compatriot who easily started outlining the forms with the help of bold, unfaltering brush strokes, without making sketches on the surface of the wall or on cloth, echoing similar practices followed by Ajanta predecessors. Unlike the contemporary Bengali Patuas who love to paint scenes from the Ramayana and Mahabharata on paper scrolls scenes ("Jarano Pat") in an episodic way, the Utkal folk-painter prepare panels for delineation of similar scenes, specially the familiar Jagannatha group. For this purpose it is generally the custom to paste together two pieces of cloth, cut to required size, prepare the ground with chalk paste and then leave it to dry in the sun till it becomes as hard as a board. Outlines are then drawn either with Indian red or black according to ancient Indian practice. Each Pat is produced with astonishing speed on a cottage industry basis almost similar to Japan where the entire family participate in the production of folk dolls and toys. Similar methods were also practiced by the Bengali Patuas of of the villages and the Kalighat Patuas of Calcutta only forty years ago. When the stiffened surface of the panels were ready, the head of the family generally outline the subject with dexterous hand, followed by his wife and little children who then quickly fill up the space with particular colours assigned to each member. Finishing touch is generally given again by the head of the family and with final coating of shiny "bel" fruit gum carefully applied with a plantain leaf, which act as a preservative obviating the necessity of a glass cover—the Pat is ready for the market. Scrupulously following the age old practice, the older generation of the folk artist of Orissa still use mainly primary colours of indegenous earth or vegetable origin mixed with tamarind seed gum. They are, black from lampblack, white from conchshell, red from vermillion, cinnaber, Indian red or ochre from red or yellow ochre, yellow orpiment from "harital" and indigo and green from mineral rock. Like the colours, brushes are also prepared locally by the artists themselves from buffallo or rat hair. It is depressing to note that the younger generation is prone to use modern chemical colours, sadly lacking the brilliance, depth and everlasting quality of the indegenous varieties.

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[1] Reviewing the Indian Pavilion at Expo'67 in Canada, a leading Montreal paper wrote of India as "the cradle of the most ancient civilisation which is still the home of millions of craftsmen.........Everything that passes through the hands of these craftsmen becomes a work of art whether it be a silk piece with gay and flamboyant colours, a finely chiselled out statuette or a tool, recently made".

Further, it may be added here, that during my twenty years survey of Orissan art heritage, besides trying my best to stimulate the artistic activities of the State, more than three thousand exhibits were collected for the Asutosh Museum covering a wide range of media consisting of stone, metal, wood, ivory, clay, terracotta, cloth and paper, envisaging evolution of Orissan art from the 3rd century B. C. to modern times (Figs. 12, 13, 14). Very few things were purchased, most of them were acquired through exploration by myself and an ardent bond of local craftsmen. In this way Asutosh Museum can now boast of the richest collection of Orissan art, outside the State, specially of the mediaval and modern age. Its wing of Orissan folk art is, however, unrivalled.

Orissa is famous for her magnificent temples and carvings of sheer beauty. The story of her plastic arts is now more or less known from the early historic period. Unfortunately Orissan painting had hitherto been represented only by a few straggling examples of late palm-leaf drawings and some modern Pats. During my tour in 1941, I was fortunate in collecting for the Museum a series of coloured paintings, mostly on paper mounted on cloth, from Rañpur and Nayagarh. A few of these crumpled pieces recovered from dark attics, gave a glimpse into an unknown phase of Indian painting[1] belonging to the latter part of the 16th century A. D. As believed by myself and corroborated by other experts, these paintings, representing mediaeval Orissan court life, military activities and scenes Gita Govinda scenes (Fig. 15) are strangely eclectic in character. Influenced by the peculiar geographical position of Orissa and historical impact from the North and the South, the style of paintings betray clever integration of Orissan, Mughal, Deccani and Vijaynagara idioms in a fascinating manner. Happily, the discovery of this new style of Indian painting, quarter of a century ago, which so long appeared to be isolated and accidental, have been

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1. (a) D. P. Ghosh—Orissan Painting Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta Vol. IX, 1941, pp. 194-200. (b) Barrett and Gray—Painting of India, Skira U.S.A., 1963; pp. 72-75.

suddenly supplemented by the acquisition from a dealer, a couple of years ago, of 19 palm leaf pages of the Oriya version of Nala-Damayanti story with remarkable incised illustrations on both sides, touched with colour, exactly in the same style. Connoisseurs have agreed that they obviously belong to about 1600 A. D. and constitute another treasure of the Asutosh Museum.

CHAPTER : SEVEN

MUSEUM MOVEMENT IN INDIA

I

Museum workers in India should note, the tremendous appeal of museums in the U. S. A. as instruments of visual education, instruction and appreciation, in the highest degree, during the last three or four years. In fact, the biggest news, in the cultural world in 1961, was the sale at auction of Kembrandt's famous painting "Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer" for a fantastic sum of almost two and half million dollars or about one crore of rupees. More than 82,00 persons came in a four hour period, to get a look at it on the Sunday of the first week it was displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of New York which bought this painting, although it had already forty Rembrandts.

The record price paid for the Rembrandt and the enormous crowds fighting to see it, as revealed in a published communique from New York, reflect the astonishing growth during the last generation of public interest in the Arts and in attending Museums. Museums have become more popular than football games or Radio City Music Hall. In 1960, more than 3 million visitors came to the Metropolitan Museum, more than 2 million to the American Museum of Natural History a mile or so across Central Park, more than 600,000 to Hayden Planetarium adjacent to the Natural History Museum; more than 500,000 to the Brooklyn Museum. Similarly, comparatively large numbers visited the smaller Museums such as the Guggenhiem, Frank Lloyd Wrights' spiral shaped building a few blocks north of the Metropolitan, and the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum, occupying a few blocks to the south.

Let us consider the position of India in the light of the above. The main attraction of public interes is now concentrated on the cinema, sports and othet amusements. Very few people care or find time to visit a museum. We cannot imagine a crowd gate-crashing a Museum, to have a fleeting glimpse of a rare painting in fifty or even hundred year's time in India. Still, there is no cause to be disheartened. In a developing country like ours the dawn of museum movement has been seen only yesterday. Fortunately for us, the Government of India has awakened to the potentiality of museums as live instruments for national regeneration. A time has now come to carry on widespread propaganda for dissemination of "Education through Museums." It is also recognized that the Museums Association of India, which was established about twenty years ago and which had been doing valuable pioneering work all these years, could have flourished in a better way had it been more broadbased. In a vast country like India, there is great potentiality of properly designing and mobilizing the museum movement through regional associations. The importance and efficacy of organising regional associations like West Bengal Museums Association, to have better co-ordination with the Museums Association of India and ultimately the museum movement as a whole functioning in a wider perspective cannot be denied. It may not be out of place to mention here that when I reported to the Annual Meeting of the Museums Association of India at New Delhi in 1962, the news of the formation of this regional organisation, it did not appear to be very much sympathetic, some even appeared to be sceptic. But after watching the nature and activities of West Bengal Museums Association for a year, Dr. Grace Morley, in her Presidential Address at the Annual Meeting of the Museums Association of India in 1963 at Lucknow, graciously welcomed the formation of West Bengal association and acknowledged the lead it had taken in helping to strengthen the Indian museum movement. Incidentally it may be mentioned here that the First Indian Museuom Conference was held at Calcutta as early as 1907 convened by the Government of India and presided over by Mr. Anderson of the Indian Museum. So in a way, the museum movement may be taken to have started from Calcutta itself long ago.

It may be stressed here that certain broad policies recommended by the meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Museums held at Lucknow in October, 1963, which, if implemented, will go a long way in ameliorating the condition of museums and providing a stable basis for the museum movement itself. One of the major recommendations was concerned with providing facilities for museums to undertake more educational activities. It was very kind of the Ministry of Education, Government of India to support my initiative in the matter and it was suggested that Museums should certainly try to link part of their exhibition programmes with school and college service. Shri T. S. Krishnamurti, Secretary of the Board who sponsored the resolution felt that it would be a good thing if the State Governments made it compulsory that each State Museum and other smaller museums arrange at least one exhibition per month linked with the school-college curriculum and in consultation with the authorities concerned. In order to work out a larger plan for such school exhibitions, it was recommended that an Ad-hoc Committee may be appointed on which the National Childrens Museum and the Ministry of Education may also be represented. It was also strongly felt by the Board that the development of museums was being held up due to lack of qualified staff which was perhaps due to the absence of suitable scales of pay for them. So it was necessary that in the 4th Plan provision, should be made for the Central Government introducing revised scales of pay for the staff of Museology as has been done by the University Grants Commission for the University staff. Another important resolution adopted by the Board, to stress upon the State Governments that the museum staff should be treated as part of the educational staff and not treated differentially from them. Museums should be treated as Educational Institutions—that had been one of my lifelong dreams. So as formulated in my Presidential Address to the Annual

Meeting of the Museums Association of India held at Anand, (Gujarat) in 1957, a scheme for a National Museum of Indian History was placed before the Board, when it was considered that the financial consideration precluded the possibility of giving shape to the scheme and the Board decided to make provision in the 4th Plan to set up a National Museum of Indian History as well as a National Museum of Natural History as proposed by Sri S. Satyamurti, Director, Madras Museum. Another resolution of the Board which gave me great personal satisfaction, was the one against the closing of the Archaeological Galleries of Indian Museum regarding which I pleaded in 1963 in the Presidential Address to the Annual Meeting of the Museums Association, West Bengal deploring that the "first axe of the Emergency should fall on Culture and the Indian Museum be made the first victim". The Board felt rather strongly on the point and on the initiative of Dr. Moti Chandra, Director, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, Sri A. Ghosh, Director-General of Archaeology and myself passed a resolution regretting the attitude of the Government, that with a plea to Emergency, the Archaeological Galleries should be closed down. The Board unanimously was of the view that the Civil Defence Organisation should be asked to vacate the building and that "Indian Culture, for the preservation of which all defence effort is being undertaken, ought not to be made the very first victim on the onset of an emergency". Since then, the Government of India and the Board of Trustees of the Indian Museum have made arrangements again for the opening of the Archaeological Gallery for the public, the unique treasures of the Bharhut, Gandhara and Long Galleries and re-organising the Pre-historic and Bronze Galleries.

II

The year 1965 witnessed a remarkable upsurge in the Indian Museum Movement. This was accompanied by a greater understanding of the importance of museums as instruments of social and cultural advancement. It is certainly a pleasure to note that some of the efforts of museum men, working both at the state and central levels, have resulted in really fruitful contribution for the betterment of museum services in this country. But undoubtedly, the most outstanding event of the year was the opportunity the museum workers in India had in exchanging their ideas with the leading museologists of International repute who came as delegates to the UNESCO Seminar on the Development of Museums in South East Asia as well as the meeting of the International Council of Museums, both held for the first time in India at New Delhi during 1965.

In this connection we may remember that Mr. P. S. Rawson, the UNESCO expert on museology, undertook a study tour of India in 1964. In his report entitled 'India—Museology,' published by the UNESCO in May, 1965, he recommended, "that there be instituted a Government Museums Commission, with a function analogous to that of the University Grants Commission, and with a Secretariat of appropriate size. It should maintain the closest liasion with the University Grants Commission over the museology course." We have been pressing for such a Commission for the last few years in the Central Advisory Board of museum and thereby fully endorse the proposal alothough it may be not perhaps be possible for the Central Government to accept it just at present. Another statement of Mr. Rawson is also encouraging. He said that "India, too, is leading the world in the University training of museology students. The post-graduate University courses, first at Baroda and then at Calcutta have set a notable precedent, which so far, have been followed only in one University in the U.S.A." His further observation is "The Museums Association should be solidly based upon its regional groups, each of which should have meetings at statutory intervals and publish its own paper. The flourishing condition of the West Bengal Museums Association is an example of what regional groups might become". This statement from a notable expert underline the efficacy and worth of regional associations in the Indian context which we have stressed more than once.

The series of Museums Camps, organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, and directed by Dr. Grace Morley, were indeed a great step forward in the improvement of Museums in general and training of Museum personnel in particular. The first camp at Madras on "Indian Sculpture" in 1963 was followed by the second camp at Banaras in 1964, devoted to "Indian Painting and their Problems of Preservation", participated by eminent museologist and art historians. This was followed by other successful Camps at Bombay in 1965 on Indian Textiles and Decorative Arts and at New Delhi in 1966 on Museum Education—third and fourth in the series. The fifth Camp—perhaps the most successful was held in Calcutta, in November, 1967 on the very important subject of integration of Museum Education with the School Syllabus besides Presentation.

The year 1965 was also an year for the further consolidation of West Bengal Museum Association's work. The success of, Annual Exhibition on the Museums of West Bengal held at Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta during the Third Annual General Meeting (Frontispiece and Fig. 20) made us conscious about the possibilities of publishing an illustrated report more or less in the form of a Directory of all the museums in West Bengal. It is gratifying to note that we have received cordial and sympathetic help from all the museum authorities of this state in this venture. This also helped us to renew our contacts with a wide range of museums and museum personnel in this area as a result of which the available information was collected during the greater portion of the year, with the members of the Association sparing no pains.

In the overall context of Indian museum movement, Museums Association of West Bengal did not also lag behind. The constitution of the Museums Association of India was thoroughly changed and modified by Dr. K. Ganguli, General Secretary of the MAWB who was specially entrusted by the All-India body for doing this job. Towards the beginning of the year 1966, the Museums Association of India organised a most useful seminar on the 'Museum in the Community Service' at Poona, which was presided over by Shri C. Sivaramamurti, now Director of the National Museum, New Delhi. I had the privilege of opening the Seminar with a paper, which is included in this book, on the general theme of the Seminar and the importance of Museums in the educational field. Besides, representative Museum personnels, teachers and research fellows of the Departments of Museology in Baroda and Calcutta University actively participated in it and in the group discussions on 'Museums and Arts', 'Museums and Cultural life', etc. The result of the Seminar, held under the guidance of Dr. Grace Morley, the President of MAI and the new Secretary Dr. Prabha Sahasrabuddhe has since been published by the Association and form a valuable document on museology.

At the sametime the Central Advisory Board of Museums also met at Poona in 1966 and its meeting was followed the Annual Session and Seminar of the Museums Association of India. The Board accepted a proposal by its Secretary, Sri T. S. Krishnamurti for the appointment during the Fourth Five Year Plan to engage at least eight Educational Officers in the principal museums in India, whose only duty will be to organise temporary Museum exhibitions pertaining to the school and college curricula and to act as liasion between museums and the educational institutions over which the present author had been advocating for years. The Board also recommended the holding of a training camp for Education Officers. The need of the appointment of trained personnel, setting up of open-air Model Museum of Indian Architecture at the Buddha Jayanti Park, New Delhi are other important items that were discussed and accepted in the meeting of the Board.

During the period under review all the different avenues of museum work in India was by and large directed towards the holding of the 'UNESCO Regional Seminar on the Development of Museums' which was held at New Delhi in January-February, 1966, organised under the inspiring guidance of Dr. Grace Morley and active management of Sri Sachin Roy, Keeper of the National Museum. This International Seminar attended by 30 distinguished delegates from Europe, America, Japan, Mongolia and South East Asia as well as eminent Indian museologists who participated either as members or observers, was able to arouse a lively interest in the multifarious facets of museum organisation and administration including the problems of education, exhibition, management and training of museum personnel, science museums, compilation of regional directories and museum architecture. Naturally the Seminar of unique importance generated an enthusiasm in the museum circles of India which led to a spate of valuable publications on this occasion on Museums of India and Museology. Of these, the special issue of 'Marg' ; the 'Indian Museums Journal' and the 'Cultural Forum' published by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India; the 'Bulletin of the Museums Association of India's Seminar' besides the profusely illustrated special issue of the 'Bulletin of the Museums Association of West Bengal' deserve particular mention.

Last but not the least, attention may be drawn to the special issue of the 'Museum' quarterly published by UNESCO on this occasion containing much useful articles of museology by foreign and Indian scholars including an illustrated and comprehensive report of museums in India also appeared. The following paragraph in that report may be of some interest to the readers. "Partly as a result of the trained leadership built up by the Diploma Course in Museology at the Asutosh Museum, and by its remarkable group of museum scholars and their brilliant young followers the Museums Association of West Bengal was founded in Calcutta some years ago. This first regional museums association publishes an excellent journal containing articles on technical subjects. It holds regular meetings and organizes lively programmes in connection with special museum occasions, for example, the celebration of UNESCO'S International Campaign for Monuments, in 1964." All museum lovers should collect the excellent literature on the problems of museum development in underdeveloped countries, science museums, chemical conservation of cultural property and climatology in museums published by the UNESCO and ICOM on the occasion. It may further be added that the deliberations of the UNESCO Seminar covering several weeks were rounded off by a special session of the National Committee for India of the ICOM presided over by the Chairman Sri C. Sivaramamurti in February, 1966 at New Delhi which was also attended by Mr. Huges de Varine Bohan, Director International Council of Museums.

The Museums in the State of West Bengal made notable progress during this period and it is highly encouraging that this was due, not a little, to the enthusiastic work of many of the members of the Museums Association of West Bengal. The organisation of the travelling exhibition on 'Electricity' by the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Calcutta, the first of its kind in India met resounding success everywhere. In this connection, we should remember that Sri S. K. Ghosh, the Curator-in-Charge, Sri S. K. Bagchi, Sri C.S. Pai, Sri S. S. Ghosh and others of the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum who have greatly improved the standard of museum services in their specialised museum field. Sri A.K. Bhattacharyya, the Director and his associates of the Indian Museum should also be congratulated for the recent improvements in the display and educational work and the opening of the new Bronze Gallery, the Nahar Gallery, the Musical Instrument Gallery and the Pre-historic Gallery. Through the efforts of Sri V. D. Krishnaswamy, the late Director and Dr. N. C. Choudhury, the Anthropological Gallery of the Indian Museum has assumed a modernised look in its presentation. Besides, the commendable graded educational service organised by Sri R. Subramanian in the attractive Birla Planetarium, the only one its kind in India, the pioneering efforts of Messrs. C.S. Pai, K.B. Pal, M. N. Dutt and their collegues for the 'Science for Children' exhibition in Calcutta are praiseworthy. Authorities of Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Barrackpore have been proceeding with their plan of installation of new galleries relating to the life of Mahatma Gandhi. The documentation work in the Netaji Museum at Calcutta also deserve mention.

Further in addition to the continued expansion of the Asutosh Museum of the Calcutta University, Rabindra Bharati Museum of the Rabindra Bharati University, in this period, the authorities of the Burdwan and North Bengal Universities have opened two University museums of art and archaeology, the Birla Academy of Arts has commenced the planning and installation of their museum wing. Sri Maniklal Sinha, one of the devoted Museum workers of West Bengal, has succeeded in planning and building the Jogesh Chandra Purakirti Bhawan, Vishnupur, a local museum in the district of Bankura. Similarly we cannot but mention the establishment of a museum wing in the 'Institute of Chandannagore' due to the combined efforts of Prof. K. Karmakar of the Institute and Shri Santosh K. Bose. Lecturer in Museology of Calcutta University. The opening of the new pre-historic and proto-historic gallery at the Directorate of Archaeology, West Bengal, resulting from the untiring and systematic archaeological discoveries by its Director Sri P. C. Das Gupta and his colleagues, the recent opening of the permanent gallery for Indian miniatures in the Academy of Fine Arts in addition to the numerous temporary exhibitions and collections and important publications of the museum of Tribal Research Institute; West Bengal, constitute other notable achievements in the museum field in this State. In this connection, we cannot but refer, to the significant explorations in the wilds of Sunderban bordering the Bay of Bengal made by the team of students, Research Fellows and Lecturers of the Department of Museology, Calcutta University viz. Sri Dilip K. Roy and Sri Adyanath Mukherjee etc. under the leadership of Sri Somnath Bhattacharyya, resulting in the find of remarkable antiquities were found which prove that the area was under human occupation from the 1st century B.C. to at least the 12th century A.D. Sri Chittaranjan Roychaudhury Assistant Curator of the Asutosh Museum continued the archaeological excavations at Chandraketugarh, one of the important city sites that throw much light on the hoary past of Bengal.

This is just an outline of the activities in the field of museum and museology. It may not be out of place to mention here that during the first seven years of the inception of the Department of Museology, Calcutta University in 1959, three of its Lecturers and three successful students have been awarded foreign scholarships for further studies in U. K., U.S.A. and the Netherlands. The sister Department of Museology, Baroda University has also made commendable progress, specially in taking the initiative in publishing a handsome departmental journal "Studies in Museology" full of thought provoking articles.

III

From the Museum point of view the year 1967 was by no means as important as 1965-66. However, it cannot be denied that it was a year of progress and consolidation, highlighted by certain significant events, trends and problems.

Calcutta's reputation as the City of Museums has been enhanced by the opening of the Birla Academy of Art and Culture inaugurated by Dr. Karan Singh, Union Minister of Tourism, on 9th January, 1967, in an impressive nine-storey building situated amidst beautiful panoramic scenes overlooking the Lakes. Besides housing, its rare objects of art and archaeology, it is pleasant to note that the Academy has also tried to accommodate cognate activities and programmes in other branches of fine arts like music, dance, drama etc. The first four stories of the art gallery, are devoted to specimens of ancient Indian sculptures, wood carvings, terracottas, textiles, miniatures and contemporary paintings and some letters and documents of eminent persons. There is a auditorium that has an accommodation on the ground floor where arrangements are being made for regular lectures of art, archaeology, literature, Indology and also educative film shows for school children. Owing its origin to a public charitable trust established in 1962, Dr. Karan Singh, inaugurating the Academy, laid much stress on the need for the mass culture of art for all, through these types of academies and art galleries, which help to broaden the outlook of the common people. From the point of view of modern museum organisation and presentation, helped with modern lighting and fitting, the Birla Academy is undoubtedly one of the finest in India now, credit for which is not a little due to its active Deputy Director Srī S. K. Mukherji.

It may be mentioned here that the Birla Industrial & Technological Museum is also becoming increasingly popular with urban school and college students as well as the rural people for its multifarious activities including Travelling Museo Bus. In Hooghly district, the Amulya Pratnasala at Rajbalhat was reorganised during the period. We are also happy to note that the Institute-de-Chandernagor was also reorganised and received a substantial Government grant, besides acquiring important documents relating to Indo-French cultural relations, received as gifts from French Organisations, regular film-shows, exhibitions and lectures were organised. The Rabindra Bharati Museum, Calcutta, has further extended its scope and activities by adding a very interesting gallery relating to Abanindranath Tagore, his paintings, works of graphic art, writings and other documents. Dr. A. P. Das Gupta, the new Curator of the Victoria Memorial Hall, one of the principal museums of the city, is also to be congratulated for his enterprise in reorganising the various sections of the Hall and in issuing a much needed handbook. The indoor and outdoor activities of Sri K. B. Pal, Curator of the Government Commercial and Industrial Museum, West Bengal, in the museum field also deserve attention.

Another event of the year is the shifting of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, from its present premises, 14, Bidhan Saranī, Calcutta to its new home at the Centenary Building within the campus of the University of Calcutta. In its new home the Museum will have at its disposal more than 30,000 sq. ft. of area instead of the very meagre 14,000 sq. ft. in the present building, where 20,000 objects of art and antiquity have somehow been accommodated in a crowded and cramped manner. It is now proposed to arrange at least half the collection according to regional, chronological and at the same time thematic manner. Attempts will also be made to present the exhibits now according to modern technique, so that their import as educational media may be fully brought out. It may be of some interest to museum workers that during the thirty years since its establishment in 1937, the Asutosh Museum had to undergo five shiftings, from place to place, resulting in continuous installation and dismantlement of all the exhibits. In 1942, during the Second World War, as measure of safety, all the portable exhibits of the Museum were transported from the Senate Hall to Murshidabad Imambara, and the heavy stone images buried in two layers in a large trench between the Darbhanga Building and the Asutosh Building within the precinct of the University as an emergency measure against air raids to which Calcutta then was subjected to. After one year they were re-excavated and re-installed in the Senate Hall, along with paintings, bronzes, wood etc. which had returned from Murshidabad in the meantime. When the old Senate Hall was demolished in 1960, the entire Museum was again shifted and housed in its present premises. Now, during the last two months the whole process of shifting to the Centenary Building, has started again—I hope for the last time. Perhaps there is scarcely anybody who will care to envy me as the Curator who had to undertake the responsibility of all the series of shifting and reshifting, during my thirty years' tenure which is now happily coming to a close.

Besides, the alarming increase of spoliation of temple sculptures and theft of temple idols, throughout the country which has apparently become a new social malady, the theft of museum treasures, has surprisingly grown to a widespread scale recently. I shall cite only a few cases as reported in the press. In May, 1967, a rare and valuable Mughal miniature found missing, during day time, from the Art Section of the Indian Museum. According to a member of the Rajasthan Assembly, certain manuscripts of the 16th and 17th centuries and 175 old paintings had been stolen from the Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur. It was just bewildering to be told that they were found missing while being shifted from one room to another! Following the theft of 49 paintings and an intaglio from the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, strict security measures were reported to have been adopted. Similarly we understand that following the Indian Museum theft, the Board of Trustees had decided to appoint a Security Officer. A like measure is also under the consideration of the Calcutta University authorities, subsequent to the theft of a Mughal line drawing from the Asutosh Museum only a few months ago. I believe that this sudden spurt in theft of art treasures, is due to the growing appreciation and awareness of Indian art heritage in western countries, after the World War II, specially during the last ten years. Formerly, Asiatic art objects of Far Eastern origin only had a ready market, particularly in America. This attraction is now being matched by Indian art treasures by and large. And there is a widespread belief, both among the public and police that gang or gangs are working clandestinely, sometimes with the covert help of curiodealers, to export these treasures abroad in expectation of hondsome returns. Unfortunately, this nefarious game has almost assumed the form of regular business and unless the public and government become extremely alert and vigilant, valuable relics of our cultural heritage are in imminent peril of being drained out of the country.

To some people the vanishing of antiquities and objects of art from the above museums besides the National Museum, New Delhi, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, and the Archaeological Museum, Nalanda are nothing very serious but at least to a few others such thefts appear extremely dangerous and perplexing. We are indeed surprised to know that even in a hundred years time a famous museum has failed to make a catalogue of all its collection and we are equally surprised to learn that the keys of a particular showcase move with more than one personnel. Of course, such events are common throughout the world and as a natural consequence the loss of precious museum objects have become almost commonplace. The following incidents connected with the Cairo Museum may help us in adopting some remedial measures against such malpractices that are prevalent in India at present.

The Cairo Museum is justly famous all over the world for its collection of Egyptian antiquities including the unique relics brought from the grave of the Pharao Tut-en Kham-en. Some years ago, an interested visitor going round the galleries of the Museum was surprised to notice a show case displaying old coins missing from its usual place. His enquiries about the whereabouts of the show-case elicited no satisfactory reply. In fact, the authorities failed to locate the entire collection including the show-case.

When this report reached the Government of Egypt, Prof. Selim Hasan was appointed for comprehensive cataloguing of the entire collection. As a result of Prof. Hasan's efforts it was detected that 26,000 valuable objects, including such priceless treasures as the necklace of the horse of Tut-en Kham-en and his royal sceptre, were missing. The loss was estimated of the order of two crores of rupees though some of the items were really priceless being the only one of its kind in existence. In addition, 80,000 other objects including six hundred beautiful mummies were found damaged. Moreover, puppies had sought shelter in a jewellery box known to be at least three thousand years old. Further enquiries revealed that objects had been brought directly from the excavation sites to the Museum and strangely enough no proper cataloguing or registration were even attempted either by the archaeologist or by the museum authorities. It was also discovered that each show-case had at least ten keys distributed to different persons who had independent access to the showcases and surprisingly five keys remained untraced to the end.

After this, on the advice of Prof. Hasan, all the 140 guards employed in the museum were relieved of their duties and a fresh set employed. The wooden cupboards were replaced by steel lockers. Separate Curators were put in charge of each department and they alone held the keys and were responsible for the safe custody of antiquities in their respective sections. The possibility of pilferage was thus minimised and some sort of order established in the Museum out of chaos.

Many suggestions have been made and steps lately taken by the authorities of museums in India, against thefts, but I personally think adoption in this country of the strict system introduced in Cairo Museum may go a long way in checking the increasing evil, in addition to posting of round the clock watchmen and use of electronic devices.

The recently published fifth report of Estimate Committee of the Lok Sabha, regarding the organisation, working and financial requirements of the institutions of national importance controlled or supported by the Government of India viz, the National Museum and National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, the Indian Museum, Victoria Memorial and the Asiatic Society, Calcutta deserve careful scrutiny by all museologists and museum lovers. It is characterised by elaborate, detailed and critical assessment.

In this context, I do not think it will be irrelevant to take into consideration a summary of the report which the American Association of Museums undertook in 1958 to reorganise its programme in providing more effective leadership and increased services for the museum field and its profession, as published in 1962. I think it will give us much food for comparative assessment and appraisal of our own work here as well a vivid picture of the more or less unfavourable social status of the museums there and here.

"During the past four years, with the assistance of IBM, detailed information was collected from more than four thousand museum institutions which comprise the field. The scope of study was determined by the different kinds of institutions making up the Association's membership. These include the art museum and gallery, the art centre and art association, the history museum, the historic house, the historical society, the natural history and science museum, the planetarium, zoo, aquarium, botanical garden, arborium and special libraries with collections other than books.

Preliminary findings of the study revealed the outstanding trend to be the increase in the number of new museums over the past thirty years. The rate of growth has been about one new museum every four days.[1]

The most important trend affecting the field was the marked development of the museum as an educational and research institution. One survey showed that six hundred museums alone were conducting classes and lectures for 7,968,123 school children; 4,549,252 adults; 56,079 art students; 14,112 undergraduates registered for college credit museum course; and 3,899 advanced students engaged in museum-university projects in art, science, or history.

In the cultural field, museums are offering to an ever-increasing community audience professionally organized programs which include concerts, lectures, theatre, dance and films.

With all of its accomplishments, the museum field today still lacks proper recognition for its achievements in the field of education, and for the increasingly important role it is playing in the cultural life of the community.

Museums are not adequately represented in the programs of federal agencies or private organisations concerned with educational, social, or cultural matters at the national level.

Museums do not receive the same tax benefits as schools, churches, or hospitals.

Funds coming from foundations, corporations, and federal-state-county levels of government represent less than two percent of the total annual income of all museums.

There is an acute shortage of museum personnel because the museum profession stands at a lower salary level, with fewer benefits and far less recognition, than any comparable professional group.

Training programmes are few, and the profession must rely upon day-to-day experience for training.

Many of the problems arising in the field are due to a lack of information about museum and the fact that there is far too little communication among museums, and very little real communication between the museum field as a whole, and the public. This lack of information and the failure of communications is, in part, responsible for the museums unfavourable tax position and the repeated failure to recognize museums as a community resource comparable to libraries and schools. It has also caused the quality of many museums to suffer."

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(1) A study made by the author early in the nineteen thirties revealed that even during the worst phase of world depression in 1929-30, the growth was one new museum every fortnight in U. S. A.

CHAPTER: EIGHT

MUSEUMS AND EDUCATION

It is indeed a happy sign that awareness of the potential value of the museums as a source of education is gradually increasing among the authorities and the public in general. A great stimulus was added, in this direction by the Seminar on Museums in India held under the auspices of the UNESCO early in 1966. This is in the series began in 1952 in Brooklyn and continued in several years' intervals at Athens, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Mexico and in Nigeria. The 1966 Seminar, was a significant cultural event in India. As already stated it helped to stir the Indian museum movement into greater and more fruitful activity, besides allowing a stock-taking of the present position.

But it may be emphasised here, until and unless the prevailing system of education in India, is suitably changed to the needs of the hour, to give it distinct audio-visual bias, (including the incorporation of Museology as a subject in the B.T. Course) the Indian museum movement will fail, as it had been failing, as an instrument of national education. In the west, millions flock to the museums, both for pleasure and profit, in measures unimaginable. People there, grow up with museums from their very infancy and later on it becomes a part of their life. Personally, I do feel that no amount of endeavour, either on the state or central level, will be effective in increasing the popularity of the museums in India among the masses and making them live apparatuses for dissemination of knowledge unless the basic storey of our educational structure is altered by closely integrating the schools and colleges with museums and allied institutions. From the very start, the emotional and intellectual value of museums must be grafted on the impressionable child and the adolescent by making regular museum visits and study as part of their curriculum as compulsory as reading of texts. Then and then only the museums can play their vital part in society. My experience as a museum curator for the last thirty years leads me to this firm conviction.

In the west, museums are now most closely connected with educational institutions. Educationists now believe that a lesson conveyed through visual methods succeeds in leaving an abiding impression on the mind of the pupil better than hours of cramming. Sri Kanchan Chakravarty of the Kalyani University, my former pupil, returning from U.K., has given me a detailed picture of the way in which the museums have been integrated with schools. In the United Kingdom, for example, museums play their part as educational institutions in two different ways. Usually they attract young visitors from schools by way of popular lectures befitting the standards of different age groups and abilities and providing materials and studio accommodations for those who are inspired to work on the spot. In these museum studies there are a number of paid art teachers to guide the pupils in different techniques. They are open from early morning till evening in the week-ends. Many senior students from the nearest Art College volunteer to guide the visiting students.

Some of the museums distribute leaflets and questionnaires among visiting pupils from schools who go on noting, replying or illustrating according to demand, while visiting one gallery and the other. The whole scheme is operated in accordance with a pre-arranged programme and schedule.

In the other system, the museums which are generally controlled by County Councils run a School Museum Service. A number of schools are enlisted as members of a particular museum in the county or the zone. This has become possible because of the fact that almost every city or town in England has a fairly respectable museum and gallery. In the whole of U. K. there are more than 400 museums and galleries and there are more than 80 of them in London itself. The School Museum Service is a full fledged and associate department under the museum which is headed by an experienced, devoted and competent teacher. Most of the portable and removable specimens and collections of the museum are placed at the disposal of the School-Service Department who mount and encase them properly for safe delivery to schools. The department has its own transporting arrangements with a number of vehicles under its own control. It has its own repairing shops as well with a provision for technicians. On requisition the County Council, gladly provide transportation for this purpose. Some of the School Service departments have their own production units of specimens and visual and illustration materials in the form of prints, photographs, charts, posters, still models, working models etc. for different school subjects. A few of them have also film production units.

Again the departments have elaborate catalogues on different school subjects which are revised and enlarged from time to time. The schools can requisition the items and specimens under the Museum Loan Scheme well in advance and can retain them for a fortnight. In the countryside the School Museum Service is extremely popular and the transaction is increasing year after year. Sometime the number of transactions being more than 10,000.

The School Service also competently organise classes in the museum for such topics or subjects as are most appropriate to be taught in the museum. For example, in the primary stage, portions of the curricula on Natural History are taken up in the museum. In the junior stage, on the other hand, classes on Physical Geography, General Science, History of the Motherland, and even relegions instructions are conducted in the museum. The number of classes differ, of course, from area to area or county to county. Maximum time for museum studies is devoted in Scotland, where the greater portion of the curriculum is covered within the precincts of the museum itself.

Pupils in the secondary stage, generally visit museums for classes on History and Appreciation of Art, Local History and the History of the Past besides popular scientific topics. They visit different specialised museums for specific purposes. The Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Geffrye Museum of English Life and such specialised museums are regularly utilised through individual visits, classes and conducted tours.

The classes are generally arranged in two ways, for which specially competent and trained teachers are allocated by the counties. They usually choose to take the whole party round the different galleries in the museum and explain the principles, historicity or the appreciative sides of the particular object and of specimen and then link up the whole picture. In the other method the teacher collects the necessary collections or specimens from the museum or prepares and improvises some of them himself and display in the classroom-cum-studio of the museum. Students usually come and attend these audio-visual classes as a routine work.

In some of these classes, the lectures are illustrated, if possible, with film projections, which are again, prepared by the museum or the teacher himself. It is needless to add that the teacher is provided with all the required facilities, materials and equipment. Both type of classes are followed with a general discussion in which the pupils participate and then they are allowed to draw, model or design anything they like at all. Some of these museums are fortunate to have artists as their lecturers who have proved their competence also as teachers and because of their double quality, they are accepted as very suitable for the type of job the museum seeks to cater for. The emphasis on the museum classes is given more prominence in the countryside than in the city like London, where overcrowding always poses a problem.

England is in some ways paradoxical so far as methods in museum classes are concerned. Teachers who are very up-to-date can naturally present and co-ordinate the discussion in a most effective manner. There are teachers, again who lack the quality disappointingly, having themselves followed a very formal method of teaching.

There is an increasing belief among the western educationists in Europe and more so in America, that the pupils should, if possible, be allowed to handle the specimens under careful observation of the teacher so that they may have the 'feel' of the object and thereby subjected to direct experience which is the basis of education.

The museums like the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, select some of their own outstanding and valuable collections and send them to the remotest part of the country where they are exhibited for a period of three months in the local Town Hall, the Public Library, or the Art College. Thus the country folk get almost the same opportunity to see and enjoy their national treasures as the better placed citizens. Very judiciously selected and properly labelled with a history and points of appreciation, the specimens are invariably changed from time to time by the museum personnel.

Why cannot we, in India, adopt the School Museum Service, a growing institution in Western Education System and Organisation? Education at all levels, Primary, Higher Secondary and University can surely be improved if steps are taken by the different authorities concerned, to integrate the museums and educational institutions of different categories. Students can thus learn more quickly, effectively and the present lamentable wastage in the field of examinations to which we are mute helpless witnesses can be checked.

One of the resolutions adopted by the seventh meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Museums held at Lucknow in 1963 recommended 'that museums should undertake more educational activities and certainly try to link part of their exhibition programme with school and college service. It would be a good thing if the State Governments made it compulsory that each State Museum and other smaller museums arrange at least one exhibition per month, linked with school/college curriculum and in consultation with the authorities concerned.' But so far as I know none of the State and other museums have tried to translate into action the very wise and significant recommendation cited above.

It is after all not an expensive or complicated affair for the museums to undertake. For the students of humanities in Calcutta the very representative and magnificent collections of Mughal Paintings in the Art Section of the Indian Museum and the Victoria Memorial may be organised into special exhibitions to present a comprehensive picture of the political, social and cultural activities of the Grand Mughals, in an episodic way.

Not only political events, but the grandeur and opulence of the court of Mughal emperors, their patronage of the arts and even their fashions and foibles will unfailingly excite the young mind and leave a vivid impression of the entire period of Mughal history. For those smaller museums who are not in fortunate possession of original masterpieces, it is quite possible, to arrange such temporary exhibitions with the help of a very cheap portfolio of loose sheets of Mughal Paintings, published in Russia which can be easily hung up to give an intimate and delightful glimpse into the historic age. Similarly, with a little bit of imagination other temporary exhibitions may be set up covering certain facets of the humanities and science subjects which will illustrate school/college curricula and illumine the minds of students with definite visual images. Particular series selected for the occasion from the galleries and reserve collections, may serve to highlight their character and importance. For example, the huge, snail of 10 million years ago, contrasted with a tiny snail of the modern days, succeeded in pointedly conveying an idea of the evolution of life on this earth through the ages, in the Natural History Section of the excellent exhibition held at the Indian Museum on the occasion of Sir Asutosh Mukherjee Centenary Celebration. Similarly, regular links can be established with all the educational institutions in and around Calcutta for a planned routined study of the wonderful archaeological, art and anthropological collections of the Indian Museum, whose galleries have been lately reorganised from the educative point of view; the miracles of modern science and technology in the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, the mysteries of the heaven in the Birla Planetarium, the art and culture of Bengal envisaged in the representative collection of Bengal terracottas in the Asutosh Museum covering the last three thousand years, the relics and records of the British in the Victoria Memorial, the lives of two of the greatest men that India has produced at the Gandhi Smarrak Sangrahalaya and the Rabindra Bharati Museum and lastly the collection of Bengal folk-art in the beautiful rural setting of the Gurusaday Museum.

There is yet another pressing reason which demands the utilisation of Museums in India on a socio-political level, apart from the purely academic compulsion. After Independence certain disruptive tendencies have unhappily appeared on the Indian scene which require the immediate attention of everybody who wish the welfare of a united state. We have recently been taken aback by the sudden explosion over the language question. All ways and means must be devised now to create an image of an united indivisible India. Museums can and must play their part as a medium of national integration to a great extent. It may be remembered that Indian art, througout the ages had been one and indivisible. Architecture in ancient India may have certain regional and distinctive flavour both in the north and the south. Architectural examples, however, cannot for obvious reasons be treated as museum pieces. Indian sculpture and painting have undeniably escaped, more or less, the stamp of regionalism. Because all aesthetic expression, throughout the length and breadth of the country in different ages, have been strictly controlled by the dictates of the *Silpasastras,* whose canons and formulas were faithfully adhered to not only locally but in all the countries of Asia where Indian culture and civilisation spread, including specially South East Asia. It may be noted that the bewildering variety in Indian dialects and scripts is absent in Indian art. For example, in the opening years of the Christian era, the Sunga-Kushana art of the North and the Andhra-Satavahana art of the Deccan, almost speak the same language. It is noteworthy, too, that the classical Gupta idiom which prevailed between the 4th and 6th centuries A. D. was scrupulously followed in Kashmir, Maharastra and the South, although it mainly emanated from Sarnath.

Only in the mediaeval period, certain traits of regionalism appeared on the surface. But it is only superficial. For who but a specialist can recognise the subtle differences, in formal plastic qualities inherent in the Gurjara-Pratihara style of the north, Pala-Sena of the east, Solanki of the west and the Chola of the far south, preserved in museums and monuments? Even a layman now knows how the influence of Ajanta permeated the art tradition of Indian Asia, in an unmistakable manner through the centuries. In the Muslim period the Mughal style of art is strongly reflected in the schools of painting and even architecture covering the entire country from Kashmir in the north, Bengal in the east, Gujarat in west and Mysore in the south. Art was indeed a great cementing factor in this very ancient land of ours.

So, I am convinced that routine visits to the museums, specially art and archaeological museums, will enable the students of all categories and the public in general, to imbibe the spirit of oneness of Indian culture and fundamental unity of her civilisation, historic as well as prehistoric.

The educational authorities of the Union Government, the State Governments, Universities, Boards of Secondary Education are requested to consider these few proposals to help and develop the museums as competent educational institutions and as valuable media for national integration.

CHAPTER : NINE

MUSEUMS IN THE SERVICE OF THE COMMUNITY

No museum, specially museums in India, can hope to meet all the demands of community conditioned as they are by staff, available space, funds for equipment and publication.

By the community is primarily meant the community of Greater Bombay, Greater Madras, Greater Calcutta, Greater Delhi and other cities including their many suburbs which exceed a million inhabitants. The city museum can, if properly organised, serve them within a thirty-mile radius as they are doing it in the United States of America. With the rapidly increasing facilities for travel, more and more visitors from various Indian States and foreign visitors from every part of the world flock to the metropolitan museums, besides the limited locality served by them. The larger public and fellow workers are also served by their staff through participation in regional, national and international conferences as is being done here in India, during the last few years.

"The community thus served", as opined by a distinguished American museologist "and even the part which is nearest at hand, in the city itself, is highly diversified as to the kinds of individual and group which it contains. In asking ourselves how an educational institution or a department of any academic organisation can best serve the community we find it necessary to adopt methods and emphasise its various ways. This leads to diversification in personnel as well as in activities. For example, the community contains many different age levels. Within the school system, the department of education must meet the needs of students from the lowest grades of the elementary school through graduate school of the University. In addition it must meet the needs of the adult public which is no longer in school, but is still eager to continue its informal education. The community is diversified according to educational levels, both as to general education and as to special training in the arts. The educational programme must be adopted according to the needs and abilities of the general public, and also to those of the specialised student and advanced connoisseur. Finally the community is diversified according to special interest and need. Most of the classes from schools and colleges are not primarily interested in art as a career or subject of major interest; they are pursuing a liberal education and they wish to study the visual arts as illustrative material for understanding some period of history or sciences. The more alert teachers in the schools should be aware of this and they should call upon the museum's educational staff for materials and guidance in many ways and for adapting the study of works in the galleries to these various approaches".[1]

It is indeed a matter of gratification, that the Birla Planetarium, Calcutta has successfully phased its programme to meet the needs of the graded sections of the community of Greater Calcutta. It has diversified programmes and lectures for the more or less uninitiated visitors in Hindi, Bengali, Tamil and other Indian languages; for the very young as well as the grown up students of schools and colleges and lastly highly technical evening classes in astronomy for the research worker and the advanced students. Through this highly diversified programme, the Birla Planetarium, it is reported, has covered nine lacs of visitors during the last three years.

Some diversification in personnel also is required to meet the variety of interests and services. Lectures meant for young children cannot apparently suit adults. In India specially, where the majority, is still illiterate, we have yet to find out suitable means of communication for these masses who are divergent and quantitatively huge and whereby the Museum collection relating to arts, science or technology can assume significant meaning for them, if those can be arranged and displayed meaningfully and guide lecturers do also come forward for their aid. The museum worker in India, it is obvious, is still to find out the proper technical medium in this respect. At the same time even the range of Indian art and archaeology in the great multipurpose museums in the country, is so vast that is impossible for one teacher to know all of it thoroughly. So the educational department of the museum must encourage its teachers to specialise in their respective fields. Simultaneously each teacher and each member of the staff should familiarise himself in general basic way, the whole field of collections of the museum, so that when called upon he may conduct an elementary interpretative tour of all the galleries, as they do in the United States of America.

It is apparent, that the approach of the museum to the community and its multiple sections must lie through co-operation with other institutions in the community, public as well as private. Firstly, all the schools, colleges and universities must be included in its zone of operation. In India, it is high time that the museum educational staff should often collaborate with government and other public agencies like the Metropolitan Board of Planning, City Improvement Trust, Garden Centres and various cultural institutions pertaining to dance, drama and cognate activities. It has already been said that a museum can best serve the community by organising indoor and outdoor periodical exhibitions, travelling exhibitions and through publications, press hand-outs and radio talks.

The most important problem, however, of making the general visitor museum-conscious, can only be tackled by integrating the school and college curricula with the museum and its visual aids. Museums must be regarded as educational institutions and regular classes should be organised within the precincts of the museum as in the west. Such regular classes will also help the young impressionable mind to imbibe certain standard of an aesthetic sensibility sadly lacking now. For, during my thirty years experience as a University teacher of History and Art Appreciation, I must confess, I have been greatly disappointed at the general incapacity of the adult student to appreciate beauty and understand fundamentals of aesthetic discipline. Concerted steps are, therefore, required for the Museum to actively share the current attempt at the national level, to improve the general educational and cultural tone of the community in India.

Museums can also play their part on the socio-political level. It may be remembered that Indian art, throughout the ages, had been one and indivisible. As already stated, routine visits to the museum may greatly help in emphasising the fundamental unity of India, inspite of apparent superficial diversity in language etc. by a proper appreciation of the uniformity of style and technique of art, uniform pattern of natural phenomena and the same general way of life throughout the length and breadth of the country. Museums in India can be live instruments in national integration as well; contributing tangibly to an awareness of cultural homogeneity.

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1. Munro and Grimes-Educational work at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio, 1952, pp. 11-12.

CHAPTER : TEN

MUSEUM AND MUSEOLOGY TRAINING

'The Museum is a living world of remote history as well as of the present' is the opinion of some. Training in Museology enables one to give concrete shape to this underlying idea. So Museology is a practical subject intimately connected with the collection and interpretation, preservation and exhibition, study and research of the multifarious types of Museum objects and specimens. A proper handling of these material objects require an adequate theoretical knowledge about them without which it is hardly possible to identify, exhibit or use them for public education, and higher research.

It is well known that improvement and development of the museums in India require the services of well-trained personnel in Museology of which there has been a dearth so long. Asutosh Museum of Indian Art of the University of Calcutta was the first institution to devise a scheme of Certificate Course in Museum Training in 1942. But it was not possible to give practical effect to it because of the prevalence of war condition then. In 1952, the University of Baroda then took the lead in the matter. The efforts initiated by the University of Calcutta for a proper training in Museum technique, education and administration under the auspices of the Asutosh Museum were revived in the year 1956. This time, the syllabus, rules and regulations for a comprehensive two-year Post-Graduate Diploma Course in Museology were drawn up with the help of experienced museum men and university teachers. Classes were started from the year 1959, with a substantial grant from the University Grants Commission for implementing the course and the first batch of students duly passed in 1961 while the subsequent batches are coming, moving and making way for next incoming batch of trainees every year, since then.*

With a view to give an all round training in actual museum technique and museum education, the first part of the Diploma Course is grouped into three General Papers concerning (1) Museum Organisation and Administration, (2) Principles of Education, Museum Education, History of Museums and Technical Aids (3) Conservation & Preservation. This is a group of compulsory papers for all the students of the different subjects fields. The second part of the Course is divided into two optional sub-groups. The first sub-group is comprised of (a) History and Archaeology (b) Arts & Crafts and (c) Anthropology, while the second sub-group is comprised of (a) Geology and Geography (b) Botany and Agriculture and (c) Zoology. All the above mentioned papers carry 100 marks each and 200 marks are alloted for practical examination in the general and optional papers and an additional 200 marks for thesis on any subject of museum science, totalling 1000 marks. Besides careful consideration of the need for the practical orientation of the students in their particular fields of specialization, a balanced course between theory and practice has always been stressed. In an overall analysis more than 50% of the classes are devoted to a practical understanding of the subjects and their museum application, through the necessary class and laboratory assignments. Field work forms an essential part of the Diploma Course of the University of Calcutta. Submission of detailed and critical reports of the tour of the different Indian Museums, excursions in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, archaeological excavation and exploration work at Chandraketugarh and adjacent sites conducted by the Asutosh Museum with which the students are periodically associated and of various laboratory works in preservation of archaeological, artistic, anthropological and natural history specimens, including practical training in the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, form an integral part of the course.

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* It is encouraging to note that during the last seven years, seven foreign scholarships have been awarded to the students for further studies in Museology in U. S. A. and Europe.

As to the minimum qualification necessary for admission in this two-year Post-Graduate Course, the University Grants Commission has given a directive that preference should be given to M. A.s and M. Sc.s in Ancient Indian History & Culture, Anthropology, Natural History and allied subjects. It may be added here that the fullest advantage of Calcutta's multiple museums—three of them of national character,—educational institutions and the Technical and Scientific Surveys of the Government of India are availed of. Regular classes are held in the Asutosh Museum, Indian Museum, Victoria Memorial Hall, Birla Museum, Bengal Engineering College and various University Departments in Arts & Science, so that besides the requisite academic back-ground they may have a fair idea about the organisation, function, registration, preservation of museum specimens, taxidermy, presentation, and laboratory methods from on the spot and practical classes. In addition, the students participate in the day-to-day educational activities of the Asutosh Museum and take part in various other museum works including organisation of temporary exhibitions.

For the present, part-time services of highly experienced qualified teachers from the different University Departments and efficient museum administrators from local museums and Surveys are requisitioned to carry on teaching work. It has been proved by both foreign and local experience that fruitful co-operation between the different academic bodies and actual museum men would be extremely useful for a long time to come. Necessary steps have however been taken for the creation of a whole-time staff for the Department of Museology including a Reader-cum-Head of the Department and three lecturers.*

Under the present situation in India, with a rapidly expanding economy and social awareness, museums are primarily needed to provide the people a better knowledge and better understanding and appreciation of their surroundings as well. At this stage some museums covering a great variety of subject interest are coming up these days. To cope with this situation adequate consideration should be given to the urgency of instituting regional short-term certificate courses in Museology. It is also desirable that the existing Diploma Course in Baroda and Calcutta with their present coverage and standard should be transformed into a Post-Graduate degree course. With regard to the newly established Science and Technology Museums, it may be suggested, that the authorities like the Central Advisory Board of Museums, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research may consider the opening of another specialized training so that science & technology may also come up and a course be added soon with already existing University Diploma Courses. This will greatly help in the fruitful running of the Science & Technological Museums. Newly opened Archaeological Departments and Museums in various States can also take advantage of Museology courses and send abroad competent students backed by necessary scholarship awards. The possibility of employing the Diploma holders in open-air museums, archaeological sites, zoological and botanical gardens & national parks should also be examined as they will make these institutions more popular with trailside collections, lively question-houses and extensive guide-services using all types of audio-visual aids and exhibitions.

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* The Department has been made permanent with whole-time teachers in 1963.

Before concluding, the following suggestions may be placed for consideration : (1) in the matter of new appointments the Museums should generally give the first preference to Diploma-holders (except in the case of men of long museum experience and academic attainments or both running concurrently), (2) the centres of academic teaching of Museology should be turned into models in their specialised field and due recognition be given to them, (3) in view of the paucity of museums literature available in the country "The Indian Museums Review," sponsored by the Union Ministry should also take up the work of an abstracting journal of all published materials on museology and museography, (4) like the Central Archives and National Library, a National Museum Documentation and Information Centre may be established for the benefit of all persons concerned in museums and museology.

CHAPTER : ELEVEN

MUSEUMS IN WEST BENGAL

Distance lends enchantment to the view. Roaming about the streets of Calcutta, one is, now, likely to have a rather poor opinion of the city. He may even fall an easy prey to the current disparaging remarks about the metropolis. But everything is relative. A top view of Calcutta will surely cause magic change of opinion. From the Tourists' and even the ordinary Calcuttan point of view, the wonderful vista of two of Calcutta's beauty spots from unusual vantage points, are enchanting. Looking out of one of the windows of the Art Section of the Indian Museum, the lush green carpet of the Maidan, dominated at the far south by the magnificent marble edifice of the Victoria Memorial, greets the eye specially during the monsoons. It is really an unforgettable sight. Similar experience is offered by the landscape, visible from one of the top windows of the recently opened nine storied Birla Academy of Art and Culture, overlooking the placid blue waters of the Lakes bordered by flowering trees and verdure, against a back drop of dense multicoloured buildings to the south. The whole scene spreads out just like a French Impressionistic painting. In the night the scene is transformed radically; unending chains of glittering lights of the roads below and the buildings beyond, again recall to mind the wonderful panorama of Bombay at night, of Marine Drive from the Malabar Hills.

In passing, it may be noted here, that the museum movement in West Bengal has led to the growth of more than 60 museums, of varying dimensions, illustrating the multifarious facets of life, past and present. West Bengal has not only the distinction of having some of the oldest and largest museums in the country, the first University

Museum and the only Planetarium of its kind but also the first and foremost scientific and industrial museum in India. Calcutta which was formerly known as the City of Palaces, may now easily be called the City of Museums. There are about thirty museums, large and small, in and around the city itself. The four hundred years old city has witnessed the rise and development of the modern Indian Renissance and can rightly boast of some of the largest and most attractive museums in this part of the world.

The founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, by eminent pioneers like Sir William Jones and his associates, directly encouraged the development of museums for the first time in India. From its very inception the members of the Society started a collection of objects of artistic value and specimens illustrating the natural wealth and resources of the east. The first Curator of the Society's collection, a Danish gentleman named Dr. Nathaniel Wallich was appointed in 1814. The gradual expansion of the Society's museum ultimately led to the establishment of the Indian Museum of Calcutta by the Act of 1866. Even after subsequent donations to different institutions, the present collection of art and archaeological objects of the Society is still worth more than one visit. At present the Society possesses a valuable collection of portraits, sculptures, paintings by famous European artists like Rubens, Reynolds etc; an enormous collection of Sanskrit plam-leaf manuscripts including illuminated manuscripts of the Pala period (10-12th cent. A. D.); books and manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, etc. dating from early 12th cent. A. D. to the late mediaeval ages; Tibetan xylographs, Burmese, Siamese and Javanese manuscripts; a fairly comprehensive collection of Indian coins and copper plates belonging to different periods of Indian history.

One of the largest multipurpose museums in the whole of Asia, the Indian Museum housed in its spacious building, flanking the eastern side of the Maidan, was completed in 1875. This is specially famous for its Archaeological Gallery containing the most representative collection of pre-historic and proto-historic antiquities like the marvellous potteries, terracotta figurines and other objects of the Harappan or Indus valley Culture, magnificent Mauryan animal-surmounted column-capitals (C. 3rd cent. B. C.), the impressive stone railings and gateway of Bharhut Stupa (2nd cent. B. C.) and antiquities from Sanchi, Bodhgaya, Mathura and Sarnath showing the excellence of early Indian and classical or Gupta sculptures (4th-6th cent. A. D.), a large assortment of Indo-Greek or Gandhara sculptures, striking reliefs in marble from Amaravati and a large number of mediaeval art objects from all parts of India, including the exquisite Chola bronzes (C. 10th to 12th century A. D.) from the South. The Art section of this Museum contains the best collection of Indian arts and crafts comprising of textiles, wood and ivory carvings and rare collection of Mughal, Rajasthani and Pahari Paintings and Tibetan Thankas. The coin collection of the museum is specially noteworthy and said to be the richest in India. The Gallery of Indian Musical Instruments, the dioramic display of the dress, habit and habitat of the different ethnic and regional groups of India in the Anthropological Gallery, the comprehensive collections of flora and fauna and the geological resources of India in the Botanical, Zoological and Geological Galleries of the museum offer some other unique varieties. The publications and the weekly school service of the Indian museum also deserve special mention, from the educational side.

Beside the above institutions, as already observed, the skyline of the southern side of Maidan area is dominated by the enormous marble structure of the Victoria Memorial Hall which is now maintained as a museum of mediaeval and modern history of India. It contains an extremely valuable collection of Indian armoury of the British period, beutifully illustrated Mughal manuscripts and paintings, important documents relating to the early years of British rule in India and huge assortment of large oil paintings by eminent artists like Verestchagin and others. The prints and engravings of Indian scenes by well-known European artists of 18th and 19th centuries constitute a special attraction. A hall has recently been set apart for the display of the portraits of the stalwarts of the Indian Renaissance.

It is interesting to note here that Calcutta can really boast of a historic past going back to more than a thousand vears. Few can believe that the city founded by Job Charnock in 1690 had a hoary antiquity. This will be a revelation to many from a visit to the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art, Calcutta University, which preserve images of 10th century A.D. recently excavated in the heart of the city and other archaeological relics in the suburbs. To have a glimpse of the evolution, specially of the art and culture of Bengal through the ages, from the remote past to the living present, the Visitor should step in to the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art which maintains its character as a regional museum of Eastern India through its ten galleries devoted to stone sculptures of the early, classical and late mediaeval periods belonging to the different parts of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa besides rare bronzes of Eastern and Westetn India, Tibet and Nepal; illuminated manuscripts ftom Nepal of the rarest type; unique palm-leaf manuscripts and paintings from Orissa, varieties of wooden sculptures from Bengal, Orissa and the South; collection of folk-art including the famous painted scrolls and Kalighat Pats and lastly a notable and comprehensive collection of Bengal terracottas covering a period of more than two thousand years. As the first University Museum in India established in 1937, this institution is notable for the unique treasures of Pala sculptures, regional terracottas of exquisite beauty and folk-art specially of Eastern India. The Department of Museology, Calcutta University, is also attached to this institution. Besides growing up as a centre of research in art and archaeology, it also houses the office of the Museums Association, West Bengal and conducts regular archaeological excavations at the ancient walled city-site of Chandraketugarh, 24-Parganas district (30 miles from Calcutta), whose remains can be traced to as early as the 2nd-1st cent. B.C. After years of wondering from place to place Museum is now being housed properly in the new Centenary Building of the

University in College Square. Its multifarious activities include other educational programmes—publication of handbooks, catalogues and multicoloured post-cards, regular school service, organisation of temporary exhibitions and vacation course in Art Appreciation for school teachers besides occasional musical entertainments.

For other aspects of Bengal's past the interested traveller should visit the State Archaeological Gallery in Central Calcutta and the Museum of the Bangiya Sahitya Parisad in the north-eastern part of the city. The former museum is rich in stone and bronze sculptures, terracottas, objects of folk-art and the outstanding collection of earliest proto-historic antiquities of Bengal discovered from Pandu Rajar Dhipi, Susunia Hills and other sites, pushing back the cultural horizon of Bengal to the dim past. The other museum is rich in its small but important group of excellent Pala stone and bronze sculptures, and specially Bengali incunabula and an interesting collection of original letters, manuscripts, etc. by famous writers of Bengal. A model example of a strictly educational museum is afforded by the Haraprasad Sastri Museum attached to the Sanskrit College, in the very heart of city, containing visual media for the teaching of cultural history of India through models, charts, and originals.

Reputation of Calcutta as a City of Museums per excellence, is further enhanced by the addition of a new museum, only this year viz, the Birla Academy of Art and Culture accomodated in a modern multi-storied building of its own on the Southern Avenue facing the Lakes. It is distinctive because of the modern methods of presentation applied to its collection of precious ancient Indian stone sculptures, paintings and records, old as well as contemporary, not to speak of important documents and paintings by the Tagores.

Besides the Asutosh Museum, the folk-arts and handicrafts of Bengal can also be seen in four important museums in Calcutta and its environs. Of these, the Government Industrial and Commercial Museum situated in Central Calcutta region is mainly concerned with the exhibition of textiles, toys, dolls, other handicrafts and commercial products of West Bengal. The second museum situated in Park Street, is run by the Indian Institute of Art in Industry and houses important exhibits of the folk-art and crafts of India as a whole. The Ethnographic Museum, Cultural Research Institute, in the new Secretariat of the West Bengal Government contain some objects of tribal art and crafts of West Bengal. But one of the best collection of Bengal folk-art is to be found at Gurusaday Museum at Thakurpukur the south-western suburb of Calcutta, only eight miles from the city. The pioneering collections made by Gurusaday Dutt, the Bengal civilian with varied interests, exhibit some of very best specimens of Bengal painted scrolls, embroidered Kanthas, Kalighat paintings, wooden sculptures, temple terracotta plaques, masks, dolls and toys.

Calcutta and its environs have also a number of personalia museums. Of these, the Gandhi Memorial Museum at Barrackpore, in the extreme northern outskirts of the city, is rich in its collection of photographs, photostatic copies, original documents, manuscripts, books, etc. connected with the life and associations of the Father of the Nation in eastern India in particular. The Netaji Museum in the Chowringhee area is situated in the ancestral house of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose—the undaunted and selfless freedom-fighter of India. The collection of this museum include personal effects, documents and photographs relating to Netaji's life. Special mention may be made of the Rabindra Bharati Museum run by the Rabindra Bharati University housing a valuable collection of objects connected with the life of Prince Dwarakanath and his illustrous grand son Rabindranath Tagore. It has many original paintings of the neo-Bengal School and manuscripts etc. by the renowned members of the Tagore family, led by the two brothers Gaganendranath, Abanindranath and their disciples, the torch bearers of the Indian reniassance. The newly added personalia collection of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar another 19th century pioneer is the source of an extra attraction for this museum. These collections are supplemented by rich biographical materials and paintings by Rabindranath Tagore in the Rabindra Gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts, adjacent to the Victoria Memorial, in addition to the attractive exhibits of mediaeval paintings and textiles. This institution proposes to open other galleries for presenting its collection of Indian art. Kanthalpara, district 24-Parganas on the eastern bank of the Hooghly river, is the birth place of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, the first modern novelist of India and the writer of 'Bandemataram,' the patriotic song which is now one of the two National Anthems of India. The collection of the Rishi Bankim Library and Museum include personal effects, original manuscripts, one hundred and fifty letters by Bankim Chandra, photographs and documents related to his life and work. Situated in the Hooghly district, the Carey Museum and Library run by Serampore College is only half an hour's journey northwards from the Howrah Station. It preserves the books and other objects collected by the great missionary Rev. William Carey and his close associates, J. Marshman and W. Ward. It contains the best collection of some of the early printed books of Europe and India, some Indian manuscripts, a collection of rock and minerals and the pulpit, tables and chairs used by Carey. The museum contains some of the earliest printed books in Indian and other Asian languages. The Sarat Smriti Sangrahasala, Panitras (Dt. Howrah) can be easily reached by a train journey from Howrah in the south-eastern direction. Alighting at Bagnan, the visitor should see the interesting collections of regional art, archaeology and folk-art at Ananda Niketan Kirtishala, a developing rural museum situated amidst a beautiful garden, in the same district, which has succeeded in adopting modern museum technique in presentation in a very economic way and then proceed to Panitras for seeing the personal relics of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyaya, the eminent novelist of Bengal.

As mentioned above, Calcutta also leads the rest of India, in respect of scientific and technological museums, zoological and botanical gardens. The Birla Industrial and Technological Museum in south-eastern Calcutta is run by the Council of Scientific and Industrial, Government of India and constitutes the foremost museum of this kind boasting of one of the best educational and mobile exhibition programme in India including an uptodate comprehensive school liaison service. The Museo-bus has been introduced in this museum for the first time. It houses attractive display galleries showing the latest developments in the fields of electricity and electronics, nuclear physics, general science, motive power, communication, iron and steel, and mining. Birla Planetarium, located near the Victoria Memorial Hall, is another chief attraction of Calcutta. With an inner dome measuring seventy five feet the Planetarium has a seating capacity for five hundred spectators at a time. It is one of only two in the Commonwealth, the other being at London. The Astronomical Gallery of the Planetarium includes telescope photographs of celestial bodies and busts of eminent astronomers of the past and present, magnificent murals depicting the Navagraha and a model of the largest steerable radio telescope at Jodrell Bank. Regular programmes in English and various other Indian languages on different aspects of astronomy and space-travel are run by it. Mention may also be made here of the Jute Museum of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, situated by the side of the New Secretariat Building of the State Government and is devoted to the exhibition of the different methods of jute cultivation, jute products and its technology through a successful museum display.

One of the principal attractive features of Calcutta, the Indian Botanic Garden, Sibpur, on the western bank of the Hooghly river, was established as early as 1787, the earliest in India. Perhaps the second largest and one of the best preserved botanical gardens of Asia containing some remarkable species not found elsewhere, it is significant from more than one aspect. The Great Banyan Tree of this garden, the large and small palm-houses, the orchid house, the fernery, the cacti and succulents, the branching palms, the screw pine collection, the bamboo collection, the giant water-lily of the Amazon are some of the outstanding show

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pieces of the garden. In addition to these, it has got a fair collection of herbarium specimens. The gardens and Greenhouses of the Agri-Horticultural Society, near the National Library in Alipore, is also equally significant for its pioneering work regarding the introduction of various garden plants and crops in India. The authorities of this Society assist all gardeners and horticulturists with authentic technical information and periodically hold attractive flower and fruit shows.

The Zoological Gardens at Alipore, near the National Library, is also the foremost of its kind in India and possesses a very good and representative collection of migratory and tropical birds and animals including other popular as well as exotic examples of foreign fauna. During recent years the garden has been thoroughly renovated with open air enclosures for carnivora, a rest shed, new buildings, water reservoirs for Zoo exhibits, special arrangements for the famous white tigers of Rewa, a childrens zoo etc. amidst charming surroundings.

Outside Calcutta, one of the most noteworthy museums is situated at Santiniketan in Birbhum district. Attached to the Viswa Bharati University the Museum of Kala-Bhavana perhaps contains the richest collection of paintings and sketches of the neo-Bengal school including early works of Guru Abanindranath Tagore, and his disciples specially Nandalal Bose; Javanese batik and paintings; some terracottas and stone sculptures of India, wood carvings and lacquered work from South-East Asia, and specimens of Indian folk arts and crafts including those of western India. The Rabindra Sadana or the Tagore Memorial Museum also of Santiniketan, exhibits Poet Tagore's personal effects and collection of all kinds, photographs, paintings, cinefilms, voice-records and letters donated from all parts of India and abroad. Naturally this museum is a great tourist attraction. Facilities are offered by the museum for conducting researches on the manifold contributions of Tagore and his distinguished band of associates.

Acharya Jogesh Chandra Purakirti Bhavan, at Vishnupur, Bankura, renowned for its mediaeval terracotta-decorated temples, has recently come to the fore for its significantly varied exhibits of Sanskrit and Bengali manuscripts, local paintings, manuscript covers, ancient stone sculptures etc. and may be deemed as one of the important museums at the district level. The Malda Museum, district Malda in north Bengal has an important collection of Pala-Sena stone sculptures and valuable copper-plate inscriptions and coins of Sultans of Delhi, Imperial Mughals and feudatory states. The visitors to this museum can also pay a visit the nearby ruins of Gaur and Pandua—the mediaeval capitals of Bengal, Hindu as well as Muslim. Mention may also be made here of the Murshidabad District Museum at Jiaganj; the Museum of the Midnapur District Library and Vidyasagar Smriti Bhavan Sangrahasala of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Midnapur; the Amulya Pratnasala of Rajbalhat, Hooghly; the newly started Institute de Chandernagore, in the former residence of the French Governor, also have important collections of historical objects and documents, besides objects of art.

The Burdwan and the North Bengal Universities have recently started two museums of art and archaeology at the Rajbati at Burdwan and Raja Rammohanpur at Siliguri respectively.

Darjeeling, the world famous hill station and tourist resort in the Himalayas has a number of note-worthy museums and zoological and botanical Gardens. Of these, the Natural History Museum is notable for its excellent collection of birds and animals of the Alpine region. This museum runs a regular 'Nature Education programme' and publishes a journal on natural history, with its garden representing upper indigenous, middle coniferous and lower exotic regions and its sub-sections for cacti, ornamental horticulture, orchidology, students' garden, indigenous medicinal plants and a good Herbarium etc. The Lloyd Botanic Gardens of Darjeeling is engaged in developing and preserving different types of Eastern Himalayan flora. It helps all students and interested research scholars. The unique Himalayan Zoological Park at Birch Hill, Darjeeling, also draws a large number of visitors for high-altitude animals including the breeding collection of Ussuri tigers, llama and Himalayan birds. Consideration for the setting up of a full-fledged research centre for the garden is being actively pursued. In this connection, the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute of Darjeeling is also significant, because of the existence of an extremely interesting museum of mountaineering equipment, topographical models of Sikkim Himalayas showing the routes of different Everest expeditions, high altitude birds, rocks and the like, relevant to mountain lovers and climbers.

In addition to the above, museums of various categories, Calcutta has a large number of specialised museums related to anthropology, pathology, anatomy, public health, veterinary sciences, glass technology, jute research etc. connected with University departments and research institutes. Besides a few private collections like that of the late artist Bhawani Charan Law at Bidhan Sarani; Belgachia Villa in Dum-Dum; Singhi Park in Cariahat Road, noted for its remarkable collection of gold coins, ivories and paintings; Tagore castle in Prasanna Kumar Thakur Street and last but not the least the Marble palace on Muktaram Babu Street, especially rich in indigenous and foreign art crafts and miniature zoo. They can be visited with special permission of their respective owner's. Erected in 1787, old St. John's Church in Dalhousie Square area also contain historically important paintings of artists like Joffaney during the East India Company, besides the peculiar mausoleum, in the pseudo-Mughal transitional style of the founder of the city Job Charnack and his Indian bride.[1]

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[1] For a detailed survey of the Museums in West Bengal reference may be made to the Directory published in the Special Number of the Bulletin of the Museums Association of West Bengal on UNESCO Regional Seminar on Museums, New Delhi, January, 1966, to which I am indebted for much of the data.

APPENDIX A

Asutosh Museum: Ideals of a Modern Museum

In western countries, particularly in America, museums have become powerful instruments of education with all its phases of specialised knowledge and as mediums of visual education for the masses. There is an organised relationship between the museums there and the various schools and colleges. The educational programme of American museums include firstly, regular series of lectures for the boy and girl students; secondly, popular lectures for the general public and thirdly technical lectures for teachers, professors and curators by eminent experts. Research scholars are given every facility for their study by being provided with masterpieces of objects of art and culture and other documents of history from their rich libraries and seminars full of books, periodicals, models of famous sculptures, prints of rare paintings and photographs of notable monuments, past and present.

Organisation of exploration parties and archaeological excavation of antiquarian sites in Europe, Asia and Africa as well as endowment of travelling fellowships, scholarships for study are necessarily some of the most important items of museum activity. Besides, training schools for artists and designers are established as adjuncts of museums and a competent staff is maintained for explaining objects of the museums to enable the visitors to enjoy their contact with works of art under expert guidance.

To further popularise the rich treasures of museums, finely reproduced post-card and illustrated handbooks as well as technical memoirs are regularly published according to a well-planned scheme. Special exhibitions of ancient and modern art, in all phases, are indispensable features also of museums abroad. Their permanent collections are frequently enriched either through purchase, gift or loan.

All these multifarious activities of a modern European or American museum are possible because of sufficient government grants and active co-operation of the educated public in the shape of gifts of entire private collections or large endowments. To bequeath magnificent private art treasures to the National Museums and Art Galleries are almost a part of religion of European or American millionaires. Backed by a sympathetic government and enthusiastic public, the museum authorities are encouraged beyond measure, to discharge their sacred duty of broadcasting the ideal of knowledge and beauty throughout their respective countries and also outside.

Programme of work.

The first University and educational institution of its kind, the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art is also the only Indian institution to try to carry out all the functions and responsibilities of a modern up-to-date, Western Museum outlined above. It has during the first five years of its existence not only given effect to almost all the items of useful activity of a fully developed American museum, but also evolved new methods suitable to Indian environment untried elsewhere; inspite of the absence of any specific government grant and sympathetic educated public—two of the most stimulating factors in the making of a modern museum. But unfortunately almost all its activities had to be executed on a modest scale, many of the schemes curtailed and even abandoned and its entire growth and development seriously hampered due to totally insufficient and inadequate space and financial assistance.

Named after Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, the most illustrious educationist India has produced, the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art was opened in 1937 during the Vice-Chancellorship of Dr. S. P. Mookerjee to collect and preserve representations of different phases of Indian Art, special emphasis being given to the Art of Bengal. It was also decided to collect the very best types of modern art. In response to an appeal by the University, noted art collectors and art connoisseurs readily agreed to help the growth of the Museum by gifts. Mr. Devaprasad Ghosh, M.A., P.R.S., a brilliant student of Ancient Indian History and Culture was appointed Curator to organise and build up the Museum.

Visitors—The number of visitors, mostly students and educationists steadily increased, an index to its popularity. From 1, 345 persons in 1937, it increased to 3, 304 in 1941 and more than 8,000 in 1948. Many distinguished Indians and foreigners visited the Museum and recorded their appreciation of the collection and display and some expressed surprise at the phenomenal growth of the Museum.

Exhibits—The Museum opened with only 5 exhibits rising to 1,228 at the end of 1937 and 2,423 in 1938. They jumped to 6,000 by September, 1939. As a result the Museum became overcrowded and collection had to be strictly curtailed. Shortage of space precluded more than a portion of the exhibits being diplayed. Want of space was also responsible for the regrettable refusal of several valuable private collections as gifts. At the end of 1941, when it was decided to take emergency measure to meet the prevailing war situation, total the number of exhibits was counted as 7000 of which 500 large stone sculptures were buried underground and others consisting of 400 stones, 1,246 terracotta pieces, 483 paintings, 300 objects of folk-art, 533 metal and ivory, 102 wood, 97 textiles, 250 miscellaneous objects were shifted elsewhere. With the improvement in the situation all the objects have been brought back to Calcutta, the buried large stone sculptures dug up and the galleries re-opened to the public from January, 1945.

Illustrating the different phases of Indian art, specially of Eastern India, they particularly record the growth and development of the art of Bengal from the 2nd century B. C.

to the modern times, in all its manifold aspects, by examples of outstanding merit, not found in any other museum. This museum may also be considered as the nucleus of a Regional Museum for Eastern India possessing as it does representative specimens of the art of Bihar, Orissa and Assam. The collection of Modern Folk-art of Bengal and Orissa is again a special feature of this museum unique in India.

Acquisitions—The rapid growth of the museum—"almost a miracle" is mainly due to collection and acquisition either through gift or purchase of several large private collections. It also demonstrates the potentialities of Bengal in the field of art,—ancient, mediaeval and modern.

A systematic scheme of collection specially in ten different districts of Bengal, in which several Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate students, teachers of schools, artists took part at considerable personal risk and sacrifice yielded magnificent results. The Curator Mr. D. P. Ghosh, M. A. also succeeded in course of his tours in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, in securing unique objects of sculpture, painting and graphic arts and in discovering unknown monuments.

Among the series of gifts to the museum, undoubtedly the most noteworthy is that of Mr. Bijoy Singh Nahar. He presented in 1939 almost the entire 'Nahar Museum' containing more than 1,000 pieces and valued at approximately fifty-thousand rupees, The late Rai Bahadur Dinesh Chandra Sen also presented his valuable collection of Bengali and Assamese art to the museum.

In 1939, Mr. Biren Roy's collection consisting of 1,500 objects of Orissan art was secured by purchase, as also the Dutta collection of Mazilpur which included some of the rarest stone carvings from the wilds of Sundarbans belonging to the Pala and Sena periods.

Recently the Archaeological Department of the Government of India made over to this museum on loan, a huge collection of assorted objects excavated from the different archaeological sites of Bengal, viz. Paharpur, Mahasthangarh, Baigram, Rangamati, etc. for listing and classification and for comparative study by the archaeological scholars and research workers of the University.

Excavations—The excavations at Bangarh, started in 1938 and conducted annually till 1941 by Mr. K. G. Goswami, M. A. have thrown fresh light on the dark periods of history of Bengal. Five successive strata, reaching up to the Sunga level (1st century B. C.) and revealing numerous monuments, buildings, walls of the different periods, have been unearthed. Portable antiquities include some remarkable pieces of terracotta figures, inscribed seals and potteries and punch-marked silver coins and gold jewellery. Unfortunately due to the war situation the work at Bangarh had to be suspended. In the meanwhile several mounds at Mahanad, District Hooghly and at Nanoor, District Birbhum, have been surveyed with a view to future excavation possibilities.

Under another licence trial diggings were carried out in the Chandidas Mound in Nanoor, District Birbhum, where too the efforts have met with ample success. The Curator surveyed the ancient site of Sisupalgarh in Orissa and pointed out in his report the enormous possibilities the excavation of the site might yield. It is a matter of deep satisfaction that the Archaeological Department of the Government of India took due note of his report and started experimental diggings there recently[1].

Popular Lectures—A series of public lectures, illustrated with lantern slides were organised under the auspices of the Museum to popularise the contexts and significance of particular aspects of Museum Collection. Various phases of art, Eastern and Western, formed the subject matters of another series of illustrated public lectures as a special series organised in connection with the Art Appreciation Course[2].

Guide Lectures—One of the most important schemes adopted during the year 1941 was that of gallery demonstration meant for bringing the museum in closer touch with and making it useful as a living source of knowledge to the students of the different affiliated institutions of the University. It was arranged to invite students in small batches and show them round the galleries under the guidance Mr. Kalyan Kumar Ganguli, M. A. and to explain to them the historical, social and aesthetic significance of the exhibits. Between July, 1941, when the work according to the scheme began and December that year, about 500 students and teachers from 19 colleges and 19 schools were shown round the galleries in batches. It is being continued with great success.

Art Appreciation Course—Another important activity first started in 1941 by Mr. D. P. Ghosh as the Lecturer-in-Charge is the Art Appreciation Course. This Short Term Vacation Course, comprising theoretical lectures and practical demonstrations, is intended for trainlng artists and art teachers of schools.[3] Besides regular classes in the museum, special lectures on different aspects of Oriental and Western Art by eminent experts are organised and delivered.

Research Laboratory—A small laboratory, fitted with up-to-date instrument such as Carbon Di-Sulphide Chamber, Thymol Chamber and Formaldehyde Chamber for preserving wood, bamboo, painted objects, cotton fabrics etc. has been established under the charge of Mr. M. N. Basu, M. Sc. Special methods have been devised for cleaning copper, bronze and brass specimens. Mr. Basu has already published original research notes and a Handbook on Museum Methods.

Catalogue—An exhaustive descriptive catalogue for the exhibits is being prepared by Mr. S. K. Saraswati, M. A. Much progress has been made but the work had to be temporarily stopped on account of the removal of the exhibits from the musem, *Publications*—Publications includes a Visitor's Guide, in English and Bengali, sets of Pictorial Cards representing the best examples of Bengal sculptures and Nepalese painting and a Handbook on Museum Method. A series of handbooks in Bengali on various aspects of the art of Bengal as preserved in the museum is under preparation.[4] A memoir on the Excavation at Bangarh has just been published. The Curator also publishes regular articles on the latest additions to the museum and tour reports.

Museum Seminar—There is a seminar attached to the museum which has a collection of books on art and archaeology. The following journals are supplied to the museum:—Apollo, Studio Art and Industry, Illustrated London News, Times Literary Supplement, Geographical Magazine, Indian Art and Letters, Museums Journal etc. from United Kingdom, Museum News from U. S. A. and Illustrated Weekly of India, Marg, Visva Bharati Patrika, etc.

Coin-Cabinet—The Coin Cabinet is being enriched by regular gifts for the last few years, from the Archaeological Survey of India, Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society and the Governments of Bihar, U.P., Madras, the Punjab and C. P. It is now representative of the different periods of Indian history from the earliest times, specially of the Muslim period.

Museology—In 1941, a short course scheme for specialised training in Museology was adopted with the co-operation of the Archaeological Department of India, but unfortunately it could not be given effect owing to the existing situation. It is proposed to start the course in near future. It will include lectures on technical subjects as well as a training in field-archaeology[5].

Exhibition—The following exhibitions were organised by the Curator of the Museum :—

(1) The All India History Congress and the Indian Historical Records Commission Exhibition, 1938.

(2) The Calcutta Geographical Exhibition, 1941.
(3) The Children's Art Exhibition, 1943. (Jointly with I. S. O. A.)
(4) Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Paintings, 1943 (Jointly with I. S. O. A.)
(5) Exhibition of Paintings by Phanibhushan, 1943.
(6) Exhibition of Photographs of Mediaeval Indian Sculptures 1944 (Jointly with I. S. O. A.)
(7) Exhibition in connection with Sir Gooroodass Centenary 1944.
(8) Exhibition of Bengal Art, Government House, Calcutta, 1945.
(9) Exhibition of the Art of Afghanisthan 1946.
(10) International Buddhist Art Exhibition, 1949.

Archaeological Training—Three members of the staff of the Museum including the Excavation Officer and the Guide Lecturer and Post-Graduate Research Fellow, one Post-Graduate Research Scholar and three scholars, specially selected for the purpose were sent, under the auspices of the Museum, to Taxila to undergo training at the newly started Institute of Field Archaeology in the winter season of 1944-45.

Rural Culture Survey—One of the most important schemes devised by the Curator in 1941 having a very large bearing on the cultural life of the masses of Bengal and Orissa, which could be given effect to only partially in 1947, is the Rural Culture Survey Scheme[6]. Allied to it and serving both rural and urban district centres having large educational institutions is the Travelling Museum scheme which too had to be abandoned for paucity of funds[7]. As an off-shoot of the Rural Culture Survey, it was also planned to establish an institute named 'The School of Decorative Art'—as adjunct of the Asutosh Museum. The object of the school would have been to impart technical education based upon the ancient Bengali traditions of rural crafts as still practised by very old artists and artisans in remote parts of the country. Opportunities would also have been provided to students of the institute to study modern techniques with a view to furtherance of traditional cottage crafts[8]. This important scheme has also been held up on financial grounds.

Management—The Museum is managed by a strong Committee of fifteen members consisting of University Professors and Lecturers, Superintendent, Archaeological Section, Indian Museum; Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Eastern Circle and outside experts. Dr. S. P. Mookerjee was the first Chairman of the Committee. He has been succeeded by Prof. P. N. Banerjee. The Secretary Councils of Post-Graduate Teaching in Arts and Science and the Curator are its Secretaries. (See Notes). The Museum Committee in its turn is controlled by the Executive Committee of the Council of Post-Graduate Teaching in Arts of the University.

Publicity—A close contact is invariably maintained with the press and all the important activities of the Museum as well as the latest acquisitions are duly published in local dailies and broadcast through news agencies. Since the foundation of the Meseum, about 1000 news items relating to it have appeared in the leading dailies of Calcutta and outside. So on the whole the Museum had had a very good press—one of the essential ingredients of a living museum. For a museum, its activities must be always kept before the eyes of the public. Even during the grave emergency period of 1942-44, while all the other Calcutta museums were closed the Asutosh Museum carried on almost all its normal activities except that the galleries are partially closed and excavation work suspended.

Co-operation with other Societies—Among the extramural activities may be mentioned the lending of exhibits from its own collection to the special exhibitions of the Indian Society of Oriental Art and the Inter-Asian Relations

Conference, New Delhi; the Annual Exhibition of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal and other cultural bodies. Three of its own public exhibitions were organised jointly with the former society.

At the Exhibition of the Art of India and Pakistan, London, 1947-48, sponsored by the Royal Academy where about 50 objects selected from this museum were shown, one of the paintings exhibited was acclaimed by the British connoisseurs, as perhaps the best exhibit' in this most representative show of Indian art yet held, consisting of 1500 rarest objects.

The importance of this museum is further proved by the fact that the Archaeological Survey of Afganisthan and the Ecole Francaise D'Extreme Orient, Hanoi, Indo-China are desirous of exchanging their objects with this museum. The British Museum, London; the Smithsonian Institute, Washington and the UNESCO, Paris have also recently established contact with this infant institution barely 10 years old.

Role in National Life—In accordance with the recommendations of the All-India Museums Conference convened by the Government of India in 1937, the Asutosh Museum is the first institution in India to mould and develop its activities. It may be emphasised that the Museum, besides being the first Educational Museum in India, is performing all the functions of a Provincial Museum as testified by the late Director-General of Archaeology. Apart from works of a technical nature, it is also playing an useful part in the national life of the country by (1) exploring and surveying the different regions of Bengal to collect and preserve priceless ancient relics as well as significant examples of folk-art of to-day, still imbued with the glorious traditions of the past; (2) carrying on archaeological excavations at important historical sites in Bengal which have already yielded not only valuable historical data but also revealed the ways of life of the Bengal people for the last two thousand years; (3) introducing Guide-lecture scheme, under which batches of students from the colleges and schools of Calcutta and its neighbourhood are regularly invited to the Museum for instruction and Indian culture properly interpreted to regular streams of American, British and Chinese servicemen who flocked to the Museum, it being the only art and archaeological Museum open to the public in Calcutta during the war period; (4) starting the Art Appreciation Course for training artists and teachers in Fine Arts, as subject prescribed for the Matriculation Examination of the Calcutta University; (5) holding a series of exhibitions on diverse aspects of art, ancient and modern; and lastly (6) organising special and public lectures on Indian and Comparative art to educate the students and public at large in cultural subjects.

It may be recalled that the University of Calcutta has been trying to promote and encourage higher studies and research in Indian History, Art and Archaeology, in al possible ways, for more than thirty years, virtually single handed and without much financial assistance from the Government. It is to be earnestly desired that in view of the past records, the National Government should make a suitable supplementary grant, both recurring and non-recurring, to stabilise the Museum, to expand the scope of its activities and to remove all the obstacles which seriously hamper its growth. The Government should also recognise its provincial status and build a suitable Museum House. The Asutosh Museum of Indian Art should be made a living organism in the cultural reconstruction of the national life. It ought not to be allowed to degenerate into a mere Store-House of the Dead, as nearly all museums in India are. It should lend its helping hand to nourish this infant institution of great promise which is destined to play an important part in arousing the aesthetic and cultural consciousness of the people of Bengal, and Eastern India, irrespective of caste or creed, and in interpreting the glorious Indian heritage to the outside world.

NOTES.

1. After the amendment in 1933 of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904, throwing open the work of archaeological excavations to non-departmental bodies, the Calcutta University was the first institution in India to come forward and ask for : licence from the Government of India in 1937 to carry out archaeological excavations at Bangarh (ancient Kotivarsa or Devikot) for the training of Post-Graduate students in Ancient Indian History in field archaeology as also for the replenishment of the Asutosh Museum with ancient relics. Accordingly an Excavation Party was formed under the leadership of Mr. K. G. Goswami whot received training in field archaeology at various importan sites, viz, Taxila, Mahenjo-daro and Harappa, etc., under the direct supervision of Sir John Marshall, Dr. Mackay and others. Research Fellows, Research Scholars and Post-Graduate students besides a draftsman-photographer took part in the excavation. A licence was secured from the Government of India after depositing a sum of Rs. 2,000 with them and the work was solely organised conducted and financed by the University. During the first two seasons, the University Excavation Party received some help from the Eastern Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India in the shape of loan of excavation materials etc., but the University has since made its own arrangements in these matters also. The excavation work has been carried out at Bangarh since the winter of 1937-38 and continued for four successive winters for two or three months each season at an annual cost of Rs. 3,000/- on an average, including salary of employees, wages of labourers etc. On account of war conditions and internal disturbances in Dinajpur district it was not possible to continue the field work at Bangarh during the last three years but nevertheless the activities of the University on these lines did not come to stand still. In the meantime a memoir has

been prepared by Mr. K. G. Goswami based on the materials of the Bangarh Excavations which reveal the history of Kotivarsa (ancient Bangarh) through successive ages going back to the Mauryan-Sunga period. The manuscript has gone to the press with a foreword by Rai Bahadur K. N. Dikshit, late Director-General of Archaeology in India. During this interval the University also deputed Mr. Goswami to Ramnagar (Ahichchhatra) and Taxila excavations to study the methods of work there and also to Mainamati (near Comilla) where military diggings brought out a vast area of archaeological importance in Bengal of the Pala and perhaps even earlier periods. The University also got the ancient site of Mahanad (District Hooghly) inspected through the Curator and Excavation Officer and surveyed the possibilities of undertaking the excavations at that site which is engaging the attention of this institution at the present moment.

It is gratifying to note that the public of Bengal is gradually becoming conscious of the importance of historical records as revealed by archaeological excavations. A local Committee headed by the District Magistrate of Birbhum recently approached the University for expert help in excavating Nanoor, District Birbhum associated with the famous mediaeval Vaishnava poet Chandidas. Preliminary trial digging and survey of the site has already been undertaken by our Excavation Officer, Mr. Goswami. The Committee also helped the University financially by raising necessary funds in this connection.

2. *List of some public Lectures delivered under the auspices of the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art* :—

1940

1.	Prof. Stella Kramrisch, Ph. D.	Textile Symbols of Rural Bengal
2.	Prof. Shahed Suhrawardy, B. A. (Oxon)	Ivories in the Asutosh Museum

3.	Prof. Mahfuz-ul-Huq, M. A.	Some Aspects of Mughal Paintings.
4.	Dr. Kalidas Nag, M. A. D. Lit.	Museum and Educational Ideals.
5.	Dr. S. K. Chatterjee. M. A., D. Litt,	Art of the Greek.
6.	-do-	Negro Art.
7.	Prof, Benoy Kumar Sarkar, M. A.	Categories of Aesthetics.
8.	Mrs. Seraphia Bhattacharyya.	Gothic Art
9.	Prof. Muhfuz-ul Huq, M. A.	Muslim Art and Calligraphy
10.	Porf. Stella Kramrisch, Ph. D.	Indian Sculpture

List of special lectures delivered in connection with the Art Appreciation Course.

1941

1.	Dr. Stella Kramrisch, Ph. D.	Theory of Art.
2.	-do-	Gothic Architecture.
3.	Mr. K. K. Ganguli, M. A.	Ceremics.
4,	Mr S. K. Saraswati, M. A.	Architecture of Egypt and the Near East.
5.	Prof. Shahed Suhrawardy, B. A. (Oxon)	Chinese Painting.
6.	Dr. Kalidas Nag, M. A. D. Litt.	Place of Art in Education.
7.	Mr. K. K. Ganguli, M. A.	Jewellery and Ornaments.
8.	Mr. S. K. Saraswati, M. A.	Architecture of Persia and China.
9.	Dr. Jitendranath Banerjee,	Proportions, Postures and Gestures in Indian Art.

10. Mr. T. N. Ramachandran, M. A.	South Indian Temples.
11. Prof. H. C. Raychaudhuri, M. A., Ph. D.	Background of Indian Culture.

1943

12. Mr. A. N. Basu, M. A. T. D. (Lond.)	General Principles of Education.
13. Dr. Kalidas Nag, M. A. D. Litt.	Place of Art in Education.
14. Mr. Asit K. Haldar	Minor Arts of India.
15. Mr. S. K. Saraswati, M. A.	Egyptian Architecture.
16. -do-	Egyptian Sculpture.
17. Dr. Stella Kramrisch, Ph. D.	Persian Painting.
18. Mr. R. N. Chakravarti	Craftsmanship in the West.
19. Mr. K. G. Goswami, M. A.	Indian Culture as revealed by Excavations.

1944

20. Mr. A. N. Bose, M. A., T.D. (Lond)	General Principles of Education.
21. Mr. S. K. Saraswati, M. A.	Egyptian Art.
22. -do-	Egyptian Sculpture.
23. Mr. A. K. Banerjee, M. A. C. T. (Lond.)	Art Teaching in Children's Classes.
24. Dr. N. R. Ray, M. A. D.Phil (Leiden) Dip.Lib.	Chinese Art.
25. Mr. R. N. Chakravarti	Modern Bengali Painting—Present and Future.
26. Mr. K. G. Goswami, M. A.	Indus Valley Culture.

3. Teachers' Training Certificate Course: (Art Appreciation).

i. *Session*: The session begins in April and extends over three months.

ii. *Admission*: Admission to the Course is open to those who have passed the Matriculation Examination and have served as teachers of drawing in any recognised high school for at least one year prior to seeking admission. Candidates who have passed the Final Examination of any recognised School of Art are eligible for admission without being required to serve as teachers.

Selected candidates are notified duly and they should immediately get themselves formaly admitted by paying the necessary fees in the University Cash Office.

iii. *Fees*: The fee for the entire course is Rs. 20/- payable in advance.

iv. *Examination*: An examination is held at the end of the term, the dates being fixed by the Syndicate and certificates are granted to successful candidates. The Examination fee is Rs. 10/-. The examination shall be written and practical and in accordance with the prescribed syllabus. Candidates shall be examined in the following subjects:—

I (A) (a) General Principles of Art } One Paper.
(b) Principles of Indian Art
(B) (a) Indian Sculpture, } One Paper.
(b) Indian Painting
(C) (a) Architecture. } One Paper.
(b) European Art

Each Paper shall be of three hours and carry 100 marks.

II. There shall also be a Practical Examination to which 100 marks shall be assigned, 50 marks shall be assigned to Practice teaching and class work.

In order to pass a candidate must secure 36 per cent of the marks in each of the Theoretical papers and 40 per cent of the marks in the Practical examination and 40 per cent of the aggregate. If he passes and obtain 60 per cent of the aggregate he shall be declared to have passed with Distinction.

v. *Library*: Students will be allowed to use the University Library on condition similar to those applicable to other students of the University. There is also a seminar attached to the Department where books are readily accessible to the students for consultation.

vi. *Migration*: Students migrating from other Universities will, at the time of admission or immediately afterwards, have to obtain Migration Certificates and register themselves as students of this University.

vii. *Session*: At the time of the opening of the session students should bring with them all documents relevant to admission.

viii. *General Conduct*: In matters of general conduct and discipline students will be guided by the rules framed by the authorities of the University.

SYLLABUS OF THE APPRECIATION COURSE

i. General Principles of Art—
  a. What is Art?
  b. Evolution of Art.
  c. Different sections of Art.
ii. Principles of Indian Art—
  a. Six limbs of Indian painting.
  b. Indian artistic Anatomy.
iii. Analysis of Art—
iv. Indian Sculpture—
  Characteristics of the Indus Valley, Maurya, Post-Maurya, Gupta, Post-Gupta and Mediaeval Schools.
v. Indian Painting—
  Characteristics of Ajanta, Mughal and Rajput Schools and manuscript paintings, also modern trends.
vi. European Art—
  a. Characteristics of principal schools of Sculpture.
  b. Characteristics of principal schools of Painting.
vii. Architecture—
  a. Western Architecture—Characteristics of some ancient and modern styles.

b. Indian Architecture—Characteristics of Ancient & mediaeval styles.

viii. Practical and Demonstration work on selected subjects from the following—
  (i) Paper-folding.
  (ii) Lino-cut.
  (iii) Cut-paper designing.
  (iv) Embroidery.
  (v) Stencil work.
  (vi) Clay-modelling.
  (vii) Toy-making.
  (viii) Leather-work.
  (iv) Fresco.
  (v) Pottery.
  (xi) Wood-cut.
  (xii) Wood-engraving.

ix. Special lectures on Comparative Art including a course on General Principles of Education and Theory of Art Teaching.

4, List of publications

Memoir:

Excavations at Bangarh (1938-41) by Kunja Gobinda Goswami, M. A.

Hand-Books:

Visitors' Guide by Devaprasad Ghosh, M. A.

Museum Method and the Process of Cleaning and Preservation by M. N. Basu, M. Sc.

Banglar Bhaskaryya (in Bengali) by Kalyan Kumar Ganguli, M. A.

Cards:

Bengal Sculpture.

Nepalese Painting.

5. Museum Training Scheme

Qualifications:

The minimum qualifications of candidates selected should be the possession of a degree of any one of the Indian

Universities. Preference will be given to those who are already employed in some Museum.

Duration:

The candidate should take training for at least six months, after which the Certificate may be granted on passing the requisite test.

Fees:

A Sum of Rs. 12/-per month will be charged from each student besides admission fee and examination fee of Rs. 50.

Course:

The candidate would be expected to undergo training in the following:—

(1) General lectures on Art, Archaeology, History, Anthropology and kindered sujects and Chemistry.

(2) Arrangement and classification.

(3) Display.

(4) Labelling and Cataloguing.

(5) Cleaning and preservation.

(6) Casting and Moulding.

6. Bengal Rural culture survey scheme

The aim of the survey is to critically and scientifically study the religious, social, literary and specially the aesthetic background of the villages of Bengal, and to suggest means and initiate steps for the preservation and renewal of the different aspects of the rural culture as an essential part of the larger scheme of Rural Reconstruction.

(i) *Field work to Collect Data*:

To carry out the above aim, collection of data regarding the following may be undertaken from the different regions of Bengal:

a. Religious observances—*Bratas, Parbans & Paraba.*

b. Social Activities—out-door and in-door games, *Melas,* Jatras, Katakatha, Folk-songs, Folk-dances and other festivals.

c. Arts & Crafts—Present day condition, causes of decay, how to preserve the toy and doll industry from imminent destruction through foreign competition, survival of indigenous traditions in wood, metal, lacquer, clay, terracotta, textile crafts—amount of foreign influences, different types, their treatment and technique, inventory of different classes associated with each type.

d. Historical and literary traditions—oral and written.

ii. *Field work to collect* specimens:

a. Collection of (i) objects of ancient art and antiquity lying scattered in rural areas for the purpose of preservation and exhibition in the Asutosh Museum and (ii) peculiar types of indigenous arts and crafts to serve as models to future articles and artisans.

b. Collection of Manuscripts for the Culture Departments of the University.

(iii) *Theoretical work*

Study of the materials collected—comparison and co-ordination of original types-possibilities of adoptation of forms, models and techniques prevailing in one region to another—practical suggestion for revival or reinforcement.

(iv) *Demonstration work*:

(a) Travelling Museum consisting of good examples of 'Patas', 'Pats', 'Kanthas', 'Alpanas' and other objects of folk-art from the Asutosh Museum Collection and essential instrument of visual appeal for arousing and sustaining aesthetic interest. Ultimate effect in village economy.

(b) Typical films showing the different types of religious and social plays and festivals, songs and dances, with running commentaries therein—a powerful factor in stimulating dying customs which were formerly not only of great cultural and educative value in rural Bengal but were the only means of fostering Hindu and Muslim friendship.

Work may be concentrated in the first instance in one particular region of Bengal.

7. Travelling Museum scheme

It was formerly proposed that as long as the emergency condition exists due to the war specially in Calcutta and the neighbouring locality, the services of the Museum may be extended to the mufassil colleges in safer zones in pursuance of the following scheme. Now it is suggested that this scheme should be made a permanent feature of the museum activities.

The colleges and the principal schools in the mufassils may be asked to cooperate, in the scheme. A number of select small duplicate exhibits, photographs and slides from which an approximate knowledge of artistic activities of Bengal from the earliest times may be had will be chosen out of the museum collection. These portable exhibits may be packed in suitable cases and may be taken over to the principal centres in each district under the supervision of the Travelling Lecturer and a member of the Museum Staff. The college or school where the exhibits may be properly arranged. The objects will remain at each place for a certain period when the students of the college and local schools will be asked to come and look at the temporary exhibition. Time may also be fixed to show them round the exhibition in batches and lectures illustrated by lantern slides may also be delivered by the Travelling Lecturer.

8. School Of Decorative Art.

The Institute should be named "School of Decorative Art" and it shall be treated as a part of the Asutosh Museum. The Curator of the Museum shall be ex-officio Director of the School.

The object of the school shall be to impart technical education based upon old Bengali traditions of rural crafts and at the same time to help the students to some in contact with modern techniques with a view to improvement of the national crafts. Industrial drawing classes as well as craft

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preseyation Foundation, Chandigarh

classes in wood, texile, printing, embroidery, stone-turning, jewellery, dolls and toys, lacquer, pottery, etc., will be held.

The period of training will be for two years and a diploma will be granted to those who will pass the examination.*

APPENDIX B

Detailed Scheme for the National Museum of Indian History

Recurring (per annum)

1. Establishment: Salary of the staff,	
(a) Administrative and Technical	Rs. 61,260/—
(b) Office Staff ...	,, 14,652/—
(c) L.S. Staff ...	,, 22,644/—
(d) Library Staff...	,, 6,516/—
	Rs. 1,05,072/—
2. Contingency ...	,, 5,000/—
3. Publication (Bulletin, Catalogue, Picture Post-cards, etc) ...	,, 20,000/—
4. Repair & Restoration ...	,, 10,000/—
5. Travelling ...	,, 5,000/—
6. Research ...	,, 5,000/—
7. Miscellaneous ...	,, 5,000/—
	Total Rs. 1,55,072/—

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* Memorandum submitted by the Calcutta University to the Education Commission, Government of India in 1949.

Non-Recurring (per annum)

1. Equipment:	(a) Diorama-65×5,000/— ...	Rs. 3,25,000/-
	(b) Sculpture and Modelling, in clay or Plaster ... (5,000 figures)	,, 50,000/-
	(c) Painted background ...	,, 50,000/-
	(d) Life-size statues 100×100/- (in clay or plaster)	,, 10,000/-
	(e) Other accessories ...	,, 10,000/-
		Rs. 4,45,000/-
2, Furniture & Fittings	...	,, 10,000/-
3. Library	...	,, 10,000/-
4. Laboratory & Workshop	...	,, 15,000/-
		Total Rs. 4,80,000/-

Recurring ...	Rs. 1,55,072/-
Non-Recurring ...	Rs. 4,80,000/-
Grand Total	Rs. 6,35,072/-

To be housed in a suitable building on land measuring about one acre. If it is not possible to construct a separate Museum building for the National Museum of Indian Hisory, it is proposed that this new State museum may be housed for the present in one of the wings of the National Museum, New Delhi.

Proposed Staff

1. Director (Rs. 750-1250)

Qualifications

(i) M.A. in Ancient Indian History & Culture and Modern History with knowledge of Islamic History with at least 10 years' experience in a recognised museum or holding

Diploma in Museology with at least 5 years' experience in a recognised museum.

(ii) Research degree or foreign training in Museology preferred.

2. Deputy Director (Rs. 500-800)
   (i) Diploma in Museology and recognised artist and modller.
3. Three Guide Lecturers (one for each section) (Rs. 275-15-350-EB-25-500)
   (i) M.A. in any specified branch of History
   (ii) Teaching experience or experince as Guide Lecturer in any recognised museum.
4. Two Tecnical Assistants (Rs, 200-10-280-15-400)
5. Two Artist-Modellers (Rs. 260-15-350)
6. Draftsman-Photographer (Rs. 260-15-350)
7. One Electrician (Rs. 100-5-155-7½-200)
8. One Chemist (Rs. 200-10-280-15-400)
9. Laboratory Assistant (Rs. 60-5-150)

Office

1. One Superintendent (Rs, 275-15-350-EB-25-500)
2. One Accountant (Rs. 250-10-300-15-375)
3. One Clerk-cum-Typist (Rs. 100-5-155-7½-200)
4. One clerk (Rs, 30-5-120-EB-8-200 10/2-220)
5. One Care-taker (Rs. 100-5-155-7½-200)

Lower Subordinate Staff

1. Six Bearers (Rs. 35-80)
2. Six Watchmen (Rs. 35-80)
3. Two Night-Guards (Rs. 35-80)
4. One Gateman (Rs. 35-80)
5. Two Sweepers (Rs. 35-80)
6. Five Gardeners (35-80)

Library Staff

1. Librarian (Rs. 200-10-280-15-400)

2. One Library Assistant (Rs. 100-5-155-7½-200)
3. One literate Bearer (Rs. 35-80)*

List of dioramas, painted back-grounds, sculptures, models and life-size statues required.

	Diorama	*Painted back-grounds*	*Sculptures & Models*	*Life-size Statues*
A. Chalcolithic period-	7		5,000 figs.	100 figs.
B. Aftermath of the Chalcolithic	2		(Chalcolithic to Modern)	(Chalcolithic to Modern)
C. Vedic & Epic periods	4	2		
D. Post-Vedic & post Buddha periods	2	2		
E. Pre-Mauryyan Epoch	2	2		
F. Mauryya period-1st Cent. B.C.	4	3		
G. Kushan-Gupta period-	5	6		
H. Early Mediaeval-period	5	6		
I. *Indian Culture outside India*	6	5		
J. Delhi Sultanate	3	5		
K. Mughal period	13	3		
L. Late mediaeval and Modern	12	16		
Total—	65	50	5,000	100

* *Diorama*=65×Rs. 5,000=Rs. 3,25,000/-

* *Painted Back-Grounds*= 50×Rs. 1,000=Rs. 50,000/.

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* This was prepared in 1960, since then there has been a great increase in price index, living cost and others, atleast 40% to 55%. Accordingly the costs of different items including salary and wages have increased under the circumstances. Therefore a presentday estimator should add 30% to 45% to the amount.

* *Sculptures*
& *Models* =5000×10/- = Rs. 50,000/-
* *Life-size*
Statues = 100×Rs. 100 = Rs. 10,000/-

Total Rs. 4,35,000/-

A. *The Chalcolithic Culture of India beginning from the 3rd Millenium B. C.*

Subject :

(i) Tropical forest scene of Sind and the Punjab peopled by tropical fauna.
(ii) Town planning ; reconstruction of a street scene.
(iii) Reconstruction of the Great Bath: either (a) the royal priest of Mohenjo-daro engaged in worship or (b) dancing girls/performing before terracotta mother-goddess/Siva the great god—Rudra or Agni of the seals.
(iv) Part of Harappa with its ramparts and granaries.
(v) Trade and commercial relation between the ports and the Near East—the harbour at Lothal.

B. *Aftermath of the Chalcolithic Culture*:

To be displayed by the relics of life and minor antiquities found from the excavated sites such as Nagda, Navasa, Pandu Rajar Dhipi, Atranji Khera, Brahmagiri etc.

C. *Vedic and Epic periods*:

(i) Vedic Asrama life in a forest showing the performance of a sacrifice—village life, with wooden palisade and gateways through which pastural animals are shown entering.
(ii) Vanavasa scene of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita.
(iii) Sri Krishna preaching the Gita as the charioteer of Arjuna according to the manner of the early historical monuments.
(iv) Megalithic culture of South India.

D. *Post-Vedic—Post-Buddha period* :—

(i) Origin of Jainism and Buddhism to be depicted with the help of Mathura and Sarnath sculptures.
(ii) Mrigadava scene.
(iii) Social and Economic life of Post-Buddha India—to be represented from the Jatakas and Bhita Excavations.

E. *Pre-Mauryyan Epoch* :

(i) Persian occupation—Skylax's maritime expedition down the Indus to be reproduced from the antiquities found at Susa, Persepolis.
(ii) Meeting of Alexander and Puru—Greek phalanx, Indian war elephants (Puru's costumes according to those of the royal figures at Bharhut railings).
(iii) Fortified city of Rajagriha.

F. *From the Mauryya Period—1st Century B. C.*

(i) Chandragupta's royal procession with reference to the imperial city of Pataliputra, as depicted in the reliefs of Bharhut and Sanchi with fortified towers, battlements and storied palaces and one of the many Toronas with the Emperor himself emerging on a caparisoned elephant attended by his amazonian guards, cosmopolitan crowd—from Mathura, Kausambi, Rajghat, Ahichchhatra, Patna and Chandraketugarh finds.
(ii) Panel representing Asoka worshipping the Stupa at Sarnath with the lion pillar in the back-ground.
(iii) Scene representing Mahendra starting for Sinhala for propagation of Buddhism.
(iv) Conversion of Heliodorus to Vasudeva cult by showing him making obesience to the Garuda-dhaja at Besnagar.
(v) Scene showing a Satakarni king going to pay homage to a rock-cut shrine of Western India (after an identical painting at Ajanta, Cave—9).

(vi) Kharavela ascending the steps of a cave in Orissa with the idol of Jaina Tirthankara (to be based on a contemporary relief of Rani-Gumpha Cave and the Hathi-Gumpha Inscription).

(vii) Civic life of the people of the Sunga period—their manners, customs, pleasures and pastime—following the literary records. Jatakas and other contemporary literature supplemented by sculptural reliefs of Bharhut and Sanchi. For trade and maritime contact with the Roman world the archaeological finds from Arikamedu may be utilised. For North-Western region—Hellenistic art of Gandhara. For political or social picture—typical Buddhist reliefs.

(viii) Ports of Tamralipta and Bhrigukaccha—embarkation points for maritime and colonial enterprise for the South-East Asia, the Far-East, Near East and the Mediterranean world (Excavations at Tamluk, Chandraketugarh and West Coast).

(ix) Tamilian life from early Tamil literature.

G. *Kushana—Gupta period*:

(i) Advent of Saint Thomas in Kerala.

(ii) Kanishka from coins, portrait statues from Mathura —ecclecticism.

(iii) City of Mathura at the cross roads-crucible of cultures, Hellenistic, Central Asiatic, Iranian and Indian—Amohini tablet, Yaksini statues—contribution of trading community to Jain and Buddhist establishments at Mathura and early Buddhist caves of Bhaja, Karla, Nasik, Ajanta etc.

(iv) Golden Age of the Guptas—Kalidasa's poems—mural paintings of Ajanta cave Nos. XVI and XVII—the gold coins of Samudragupta and Chandragupta.

(v) Fa-hien boarding an Indian ship while returning home from the great sea-port of Tamralipta.

(vi) Harshavardhana and Rajyasri at the Kanauj fair.
(vii) Huen-Tsang studying under Silabhadra at Nalanda.
(viii) Pulakesin and Yavana embassy.
(ix) Pallava adventures setting sail from Kaveripaddinam or the Shore Temple at Mamallapuram—great city of Kanchipuram.
(x) Election of Pallava King (Vaikuntha Perumal temple).

H. *Pala Period.*

(i) Election of Gopala after a period of anarchy in Bengal.
(ii) Digvijaya of Sankaracharyya.
(iii) Kailasnatha temple at Ellora by Krishna Embassy of Balaputradeva, Sri Vijaya King of Sumatra to Devapala.
(iv) Exploits of Lalitaditya Muktapida of Kashmir and the Solanki hero Siddharaja of Gujrat and Bhoja Paramara.
(v) Sahi and Gurjara Pratihara resistance to Muslim onrush.
(vi) Nataraja and the Chidambaram temple.
(vii) The genre scenes from the Khajuraho and Bhubaneswar—King Narasingha Languliya supervising building of the temple of Konarak.
(viii) Naval Expedition of Rajendra Chola against Srivijaya—his empire.
(ix) Muslim conquest of Northern India.
(x) Social and Cultural Institutions of the mediaeval period in South India.

I. *Indian Culture Outside India*

(i) Social life of Gandhara to be based on the finds from Begram and Hadda (Afghanistan).
(ii) Social life of the Indian principality: Kucha-turfan Central Asia—Chinese silk traders worshipping at a Buddhist way side shrine.

(iii) Indian artists and Buddhist preachers at work in T'ang China.
(iv) Indian artists and preachers at work in Horiyuji Shrine, Nara.
(v) Atisa's journey to Tibet.
(vi) Migration of Tamil culture to Ceylon and Burma and of Bengal culture to Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Java etc.
(vii) King Aniruddha supervising the construction of the temple at Pagan (Burma).
(viii) Dedication of the Vishnuloka temple at Siam.
(ix) The gate-way of Angkor Thom-Angkor Vat.
(x) Borobudur and Prambanam of Java—King Erlangga.
(xi) Saiva temples of Champa.
(xii) Spread of Buddhism to Celebes, Borneo, Phillipines, etc.
(xiii) Survival of Brahminical culture in Bali.

J. *Delhi Sultanate* (*Early Mediaeval period*)

(i) Mosque and the Kutub.
(ii) Expedition of Malik Kafur to the South.
(iii) Muhammad Tughlaq's transfer of capital from Delhi to Daulatabad.
(iv) Maharana Kumbha and his Kirtistambha at Chitorgarh.
(v) Impact of Islam on Indian life.
Vaishnava Bhaktas—Ramananda, Kabir, Chaitanya, Guru Nanak etc.
(vi) Prosperity of Vijaynagar under Krishna Deva Raya, Sayana and Madhavacharya.
(vii) Battle of Talikota-Ibrahim—Adil Shah.
(viii) Public works of Sher Shah.

K. *Mughal period*

(i) Babar's life and achievements—Early Mughal paintings, contemporary architecture and crafts.

(ii) Akbar's Ibadatkhana, attended by nine Jewels discussing religious principles (Fatehpur Sikri).

(iii) The siege of Chitor—contemporary paintings.

(iv) A harem scene—based on 'The proclamation of the birth of Salim' from Akbar Nama.

(v) Scenes from the life of Jehangir—either (a) visiting Akbar's tomb at Sikandra (Chester Beatty collection) or (b) Lion hunt (Indian Museum).

(vi) Mughal Court ceremonies—(a) Monohar's masterpiece of a grand processional scene (Rampur State Library) (b) Shah Jahan in Diwan-i-Khas receiving an Eureopean embassy-(Benaras collection).

(vii) Last days of Shah Jahan—to be based on the painting by A. N. Tagore.

(viii) Aurangzeb: (a) Stooping emperor reading the Koran while a hunting in a boat.
(b) Personally conducting the siege against Bijapur.

(ix) Maratha revival: Shivaji riding as the head of the Maratha forces from the fort of Pratapgarh.

(x) Sustaining strength of the Hindu religion and social structures.
(a) Wandering ascetics clustering under banian trees. (based on Mughal painting—British Museum)
(b) Village Panchayat.

(xi) Influence of Jainism in Gujarat and Western India:
(a) Vijayasena Suri surrounded by Sravakas—to be based on Vijnaptipatra scrolls.

(xii) Social and religious life of the people at large:
based on the 17th—19th century paintings of Rajasthan and other Himalayan States.

L. *Late Mediaeval and Modern* (*European infiltration*)

(i) Vasco-Da Gama's arrival at Calicut and Portugese naval power.

(ii) English factories at Surat.

(iii) Anglo-French rivalry in the Karnatic region.

(iv) Battle of Plassey.

(v) Rise of Sikh power.

(vi) Rise and fall of the Maratha power with special reference to the third battle of Panipath.

(vii) Early British life during the time of Warren Hastings.

(viii) Foundation of the Asiatic Society by W. Jones and Princep.

(ix) Cornwallis and Bentink—(a) Abolition of Sati.
  (b) Introduction of English education by Macaulay, and Raja Rammohan Ray.

(x) Ahallya Bai and the sacred city of Varanasi.

(xi) Haidar Ali—Tipu Sultan—Ranjit Singh—their achievements.

(xii) Dalhausie—unification of India under the British and their administrative system—introduction of Railways, Posts and Telegraphs.

(xiii) Sepoy Mutiny—the first war of independence.

(xiv) Economic impoverishment of India—Famine and the effect of the Industrial Revolution.

(xv) Birth of Indian Nationalism—Indian National Congress.

(xvi) Partition of Bengal- -1905.

(xvii) Boycott and Swadeshi—Jalianwala Bag—Non-Co-operation and Civil Disobedience—Dandi March—INA, Naval Mutiny—Hindu-Muslim conflict.

(xviii) Transfer of power—Independance.

(xix) Full size portrait figures from authentic archaeological records, paintings and literary documents are to be displayed in Kiosks.

Group (*a*)

1. Priest-King of Mohenjo-daro
2. Asoka.
3. Kanishka.
4. Samudragupta-Chandragupta II.
5. Harshavardhana.
6. Pulakesin II.
7. Mahendravarman.
8. Krisna I.
9. Bhoja.
10. Krisna Raya & his queens.
11. Prithviraja.
12. Muhammad Tughlak.
13. Babar.
14. Vasco-Da-Gama.
15. Sher Shah.
16. Akbar.
17. Rana Pratap.
18. Jehangir.
19. Shah Jehan.
20. Aurangzeb.
21. Shivaji.
22. Chand Sultana.
23. Muhammad Adil Shah.
24. Baji Rao Peshwa.
25. Nana Fadnavis.
26. Lord Clive.
27. Dupleix.
28. Warren Hastings.

Group (*b*)

1. Buddha.
2. Mahavira.
3. Huen-Tsang.
4. Gunavarmana.
5. Kumaraghosha.
6. Kalidasa.
7. Bhavabhuti.
8. Dhiman & Bitpala.
9. Sankaracharyya.
10. Kumaril Bhatta.
11. Raghunandana.
12. Nanak.
13. Ramanuja.
14. Chaitanya.
15. Kabir.
16. Tansen.
17. Sibai Santara. (architect of Konarak)
18. Architect of the Taj
19. Two Court painters of Jehangir—Mansur and Monohar
20. Mansingh.
21. Todarmall.
22. Tirumala Nayak.
23. Thiyagaraya.
24. Tulsidasa.
25. Kirttivasa.
26. Tukaram.
27. Ahallya Bai.
28. Rammohan Ray.

Group, A (Contd.)

29. Lord Cornwallis.
30. Lord Wellesley.
31. Lord Bentinck.
32. Ranjit Sing.
33. Lord Dalhousie.
34. Rani of Jhansi.
35. Lord Curzon.
36. Lord Mountbatten.
37. Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
38. Sri Aurabindo.
39. Lala Lajpat Rai.
40. Deshbandhu C. R. Das.
41. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.
42. Rastraguru S. N. Banerjee.
43. Dadabhai Naoraji.
44. Mahatma Gandhi.
45. Sardar Vallab Bhai Patel.
46. Jawaharlal Nehru.
47. Sarojini Naidu.
48. M. A. Jinnah.
49. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
50. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari.
51. Rajendra Prasad.
52. Vollathal.
53. Annie Besant.
54. Srinivasa Sastri.
55. Sir Sultan Ahmed.
56. Sir Asutosh Mukherjee.
57. Udaysankar.
58. J. R. D. Tata.
59. Sir J. C. Bose.
60. Sir C. V. Raman.
61. Sri M. Visvesvaryya.
62. Sayaji Rao Gaikwad.
63. Trailanga Swami.
64. Ramakrishna Paramhamsa.
65. Swami Vivekananda.
66. Gopal Krishna Gokhala.
67. Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar.
68. Rabindranath Tagore
69. Muhammad Iqbal.
70. Muhammad Mohsin.
71. Bhimarajendra Woodiyar.
72. Abanindra Nath Tagore.
73. Nandalal Bose.
74. Jamini Roy.
75. Ananda Coomaraswamy.
76. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya.*

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* Submitted to the Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, Government of India for inclusion in the Third Five Year Plan, 1960.

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ERRATA

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40	1	for encourage, read entourage.
40	29	for as, read at.
40	40	for unrivlled, read unrivalled.
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52	14	for in accessible, read in accessible.
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71	3	for othet, read other.
71	38	for Museuom, read Museum.
72	1	for Mr. Anderson ,read Dr. Annandale.
74	23	for Museum, read Museums.
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106	8	for Renissance, read Renaissance.
108	19	for Westetn, read Western.

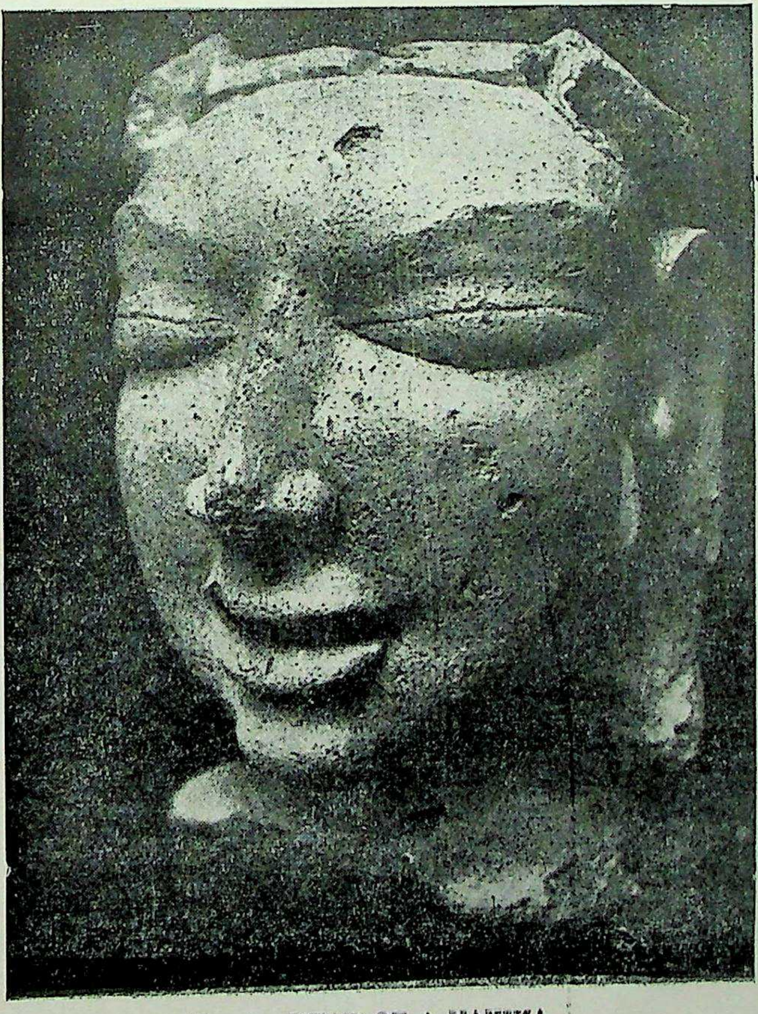

Fig. 1. HEAD OF A NAYIKA
Terracotta. C. 5th cent. A. D., Panna,
Asutosh Museum

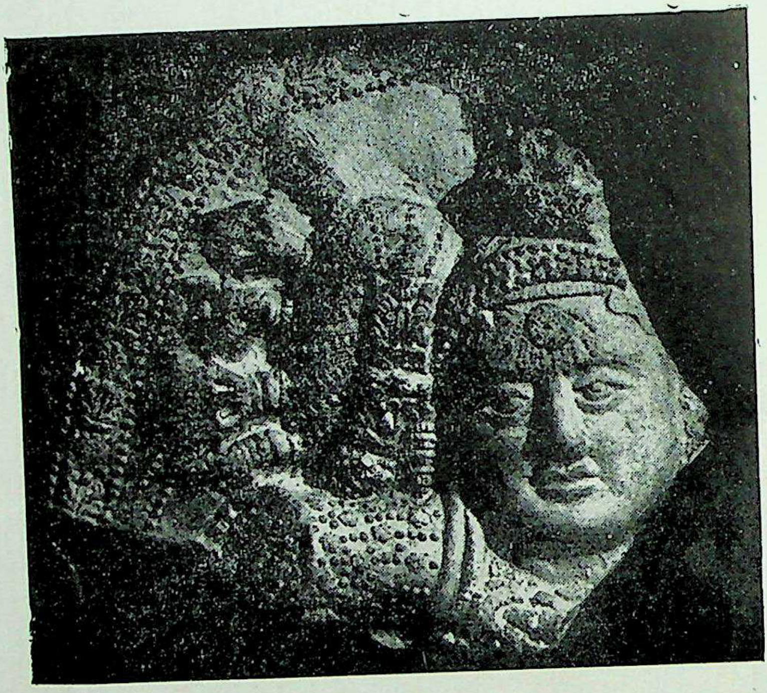

Fig. 2. FRAGMENT OF A YAKSHINI

Terracotta. C. 2nd century B. C. Chandraketugarh.
Asutosh Museum

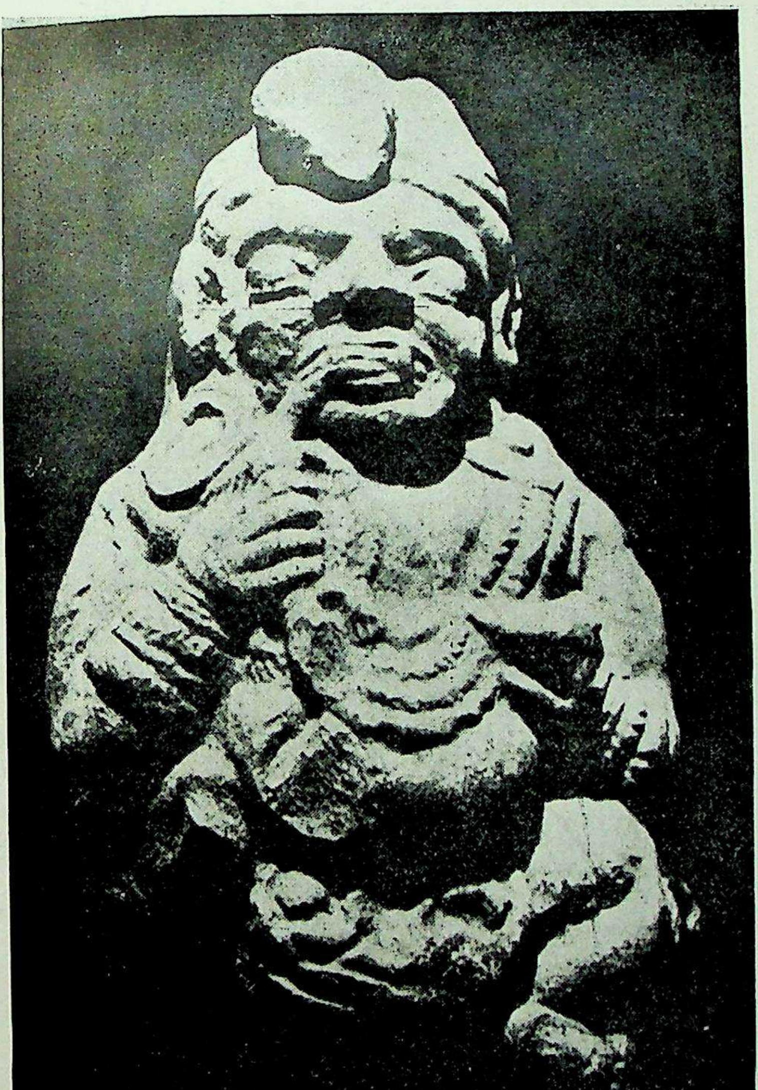

Fig. 3. RAKSHASA DEVOURING CROCODILE

Terracotta toycart, Sunga. Chandraketugarh.
Asutosh Museum

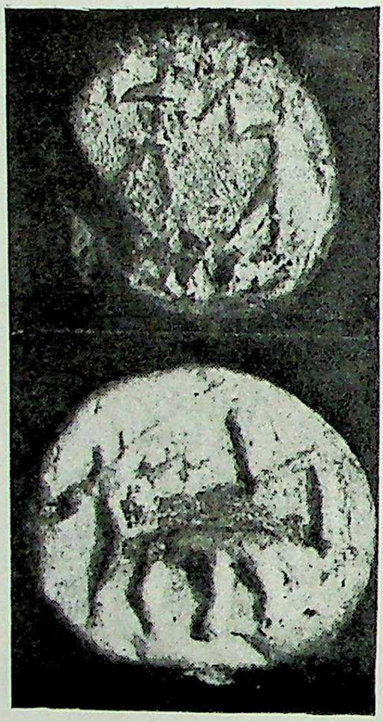

Fig. 4(a) Seal with archaic deer
(b) Seal with two human figures
Terracotta. Protohistoric. Harinarayanpur.
Asutosh Museum

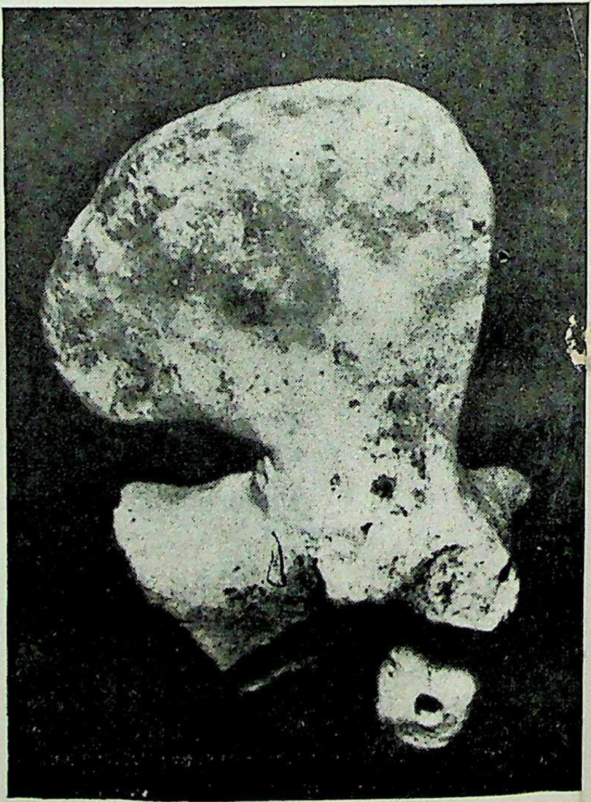

Fig. 5. HUMPED BULL FRAGMENT
Terracotta. Protohistoric Harinarayanpur.
Asutosh Museum

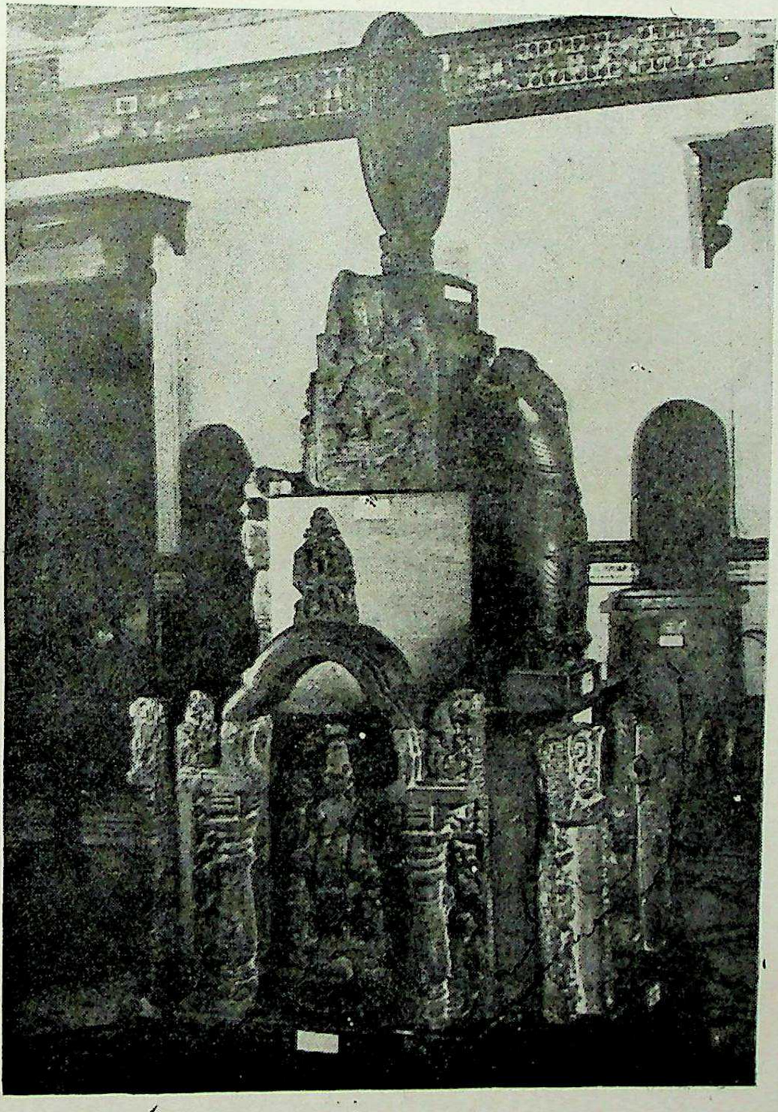

Fig. 7. Sundarban sculptures. Stone. C. 8th-12th century A. D.
Austosh Museum (Old Building).

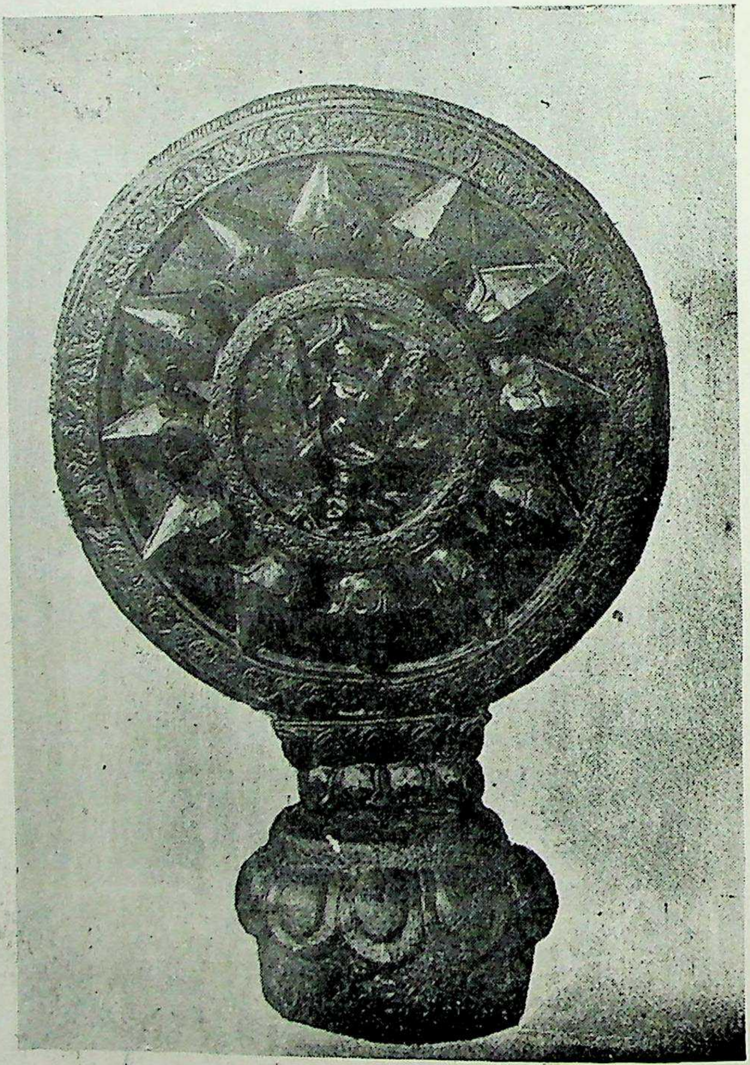

Fig. 8. Sudarsana Chakra, Vishnu dancing on Garuda.
Stone, C. 11th Cent. A. D. Sundarban.
Asutosh Museum

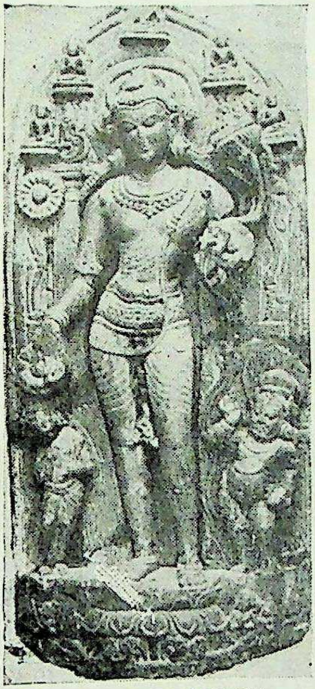

Fig. 6. MANJUSRI

Stone. C. 11th cent. A. D.
Bhangor.
Asutosh Museum

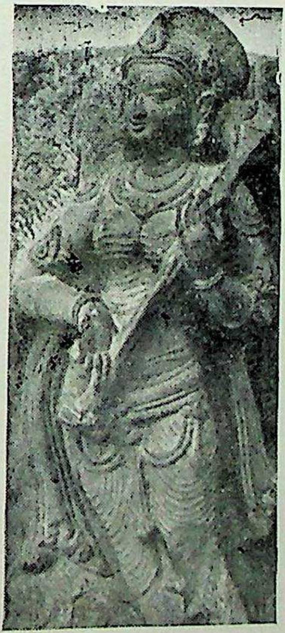

Fig. 9. SARASVATI

Stone. C. 11th cent. A. D.
Sundarban.
Asutosh Museum

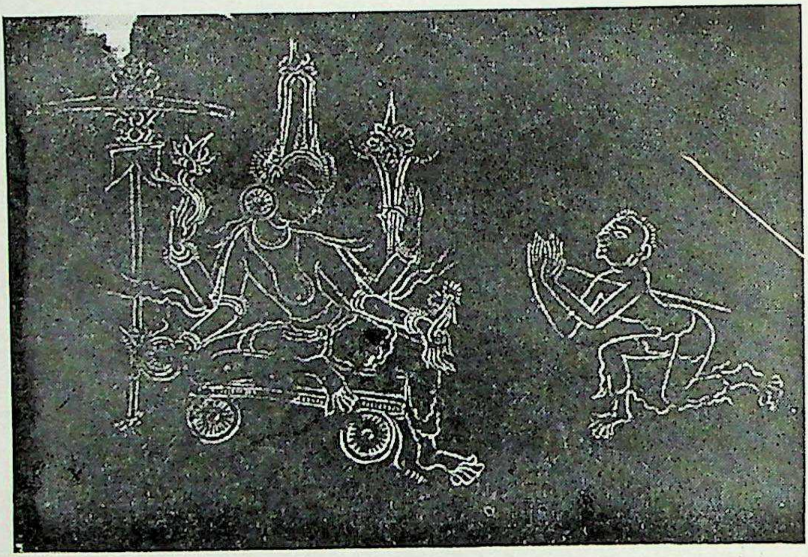

Fig. 10. VISHNU AND DEVOTEE

Copper plate engraving. 1196 A. D. Sundarban.
Asutosh Museum

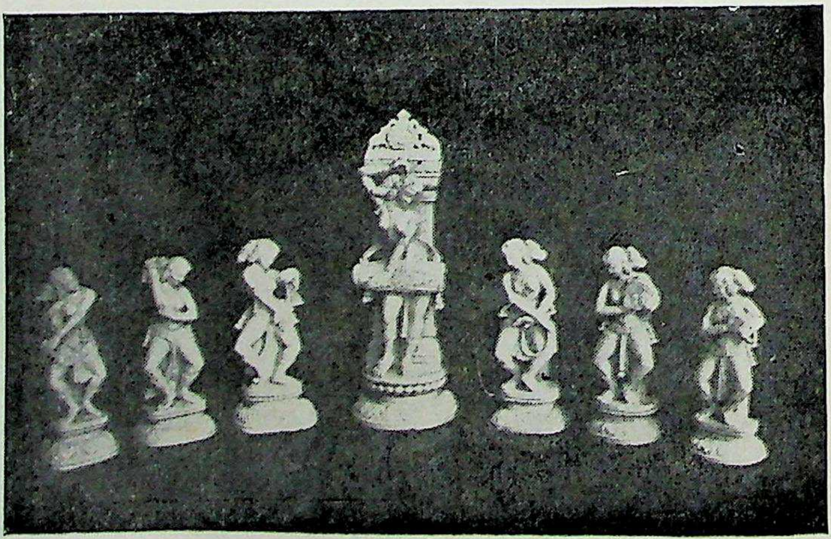

Fig. 11. SURASUNDARIS

Soapstone. Contemporary. Puri.

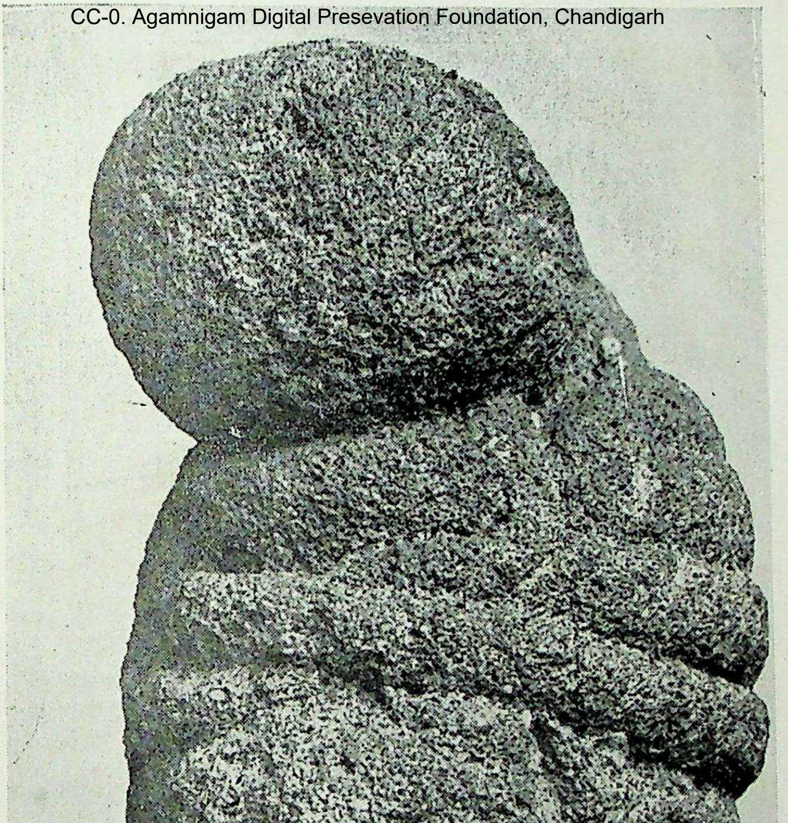

Fig. 12. HEAD OF DVARAPALA
Stone. C. 1st cent. B. C. Udayagiri Caves. Orissa.
Asutosh Museum

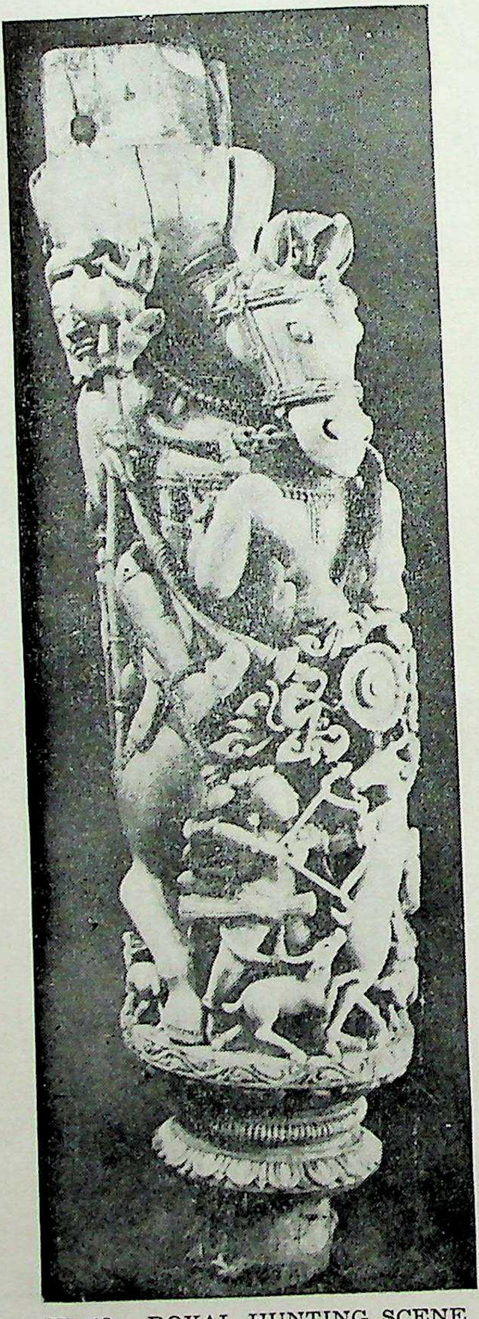

Fig.13. ROYAL HUNTING SCENE

Ivory, C. 16th cent. A. D. Orissa.
Asutosh Museum

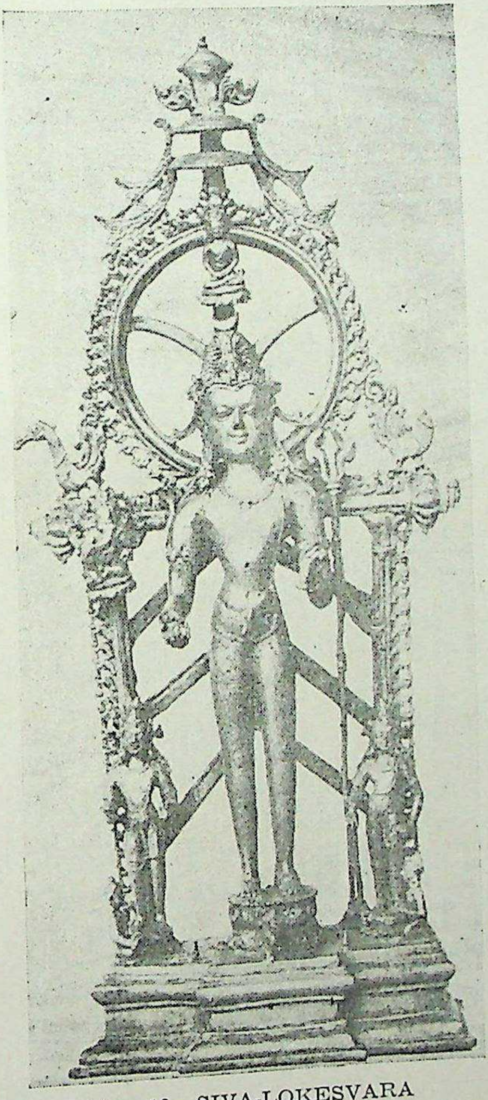

Fig. 16. SIVA-LOKESVARA

Bronze. C. 11th cent. A. D. Habibpur.
E. Pakistan.
Asutosh Museum

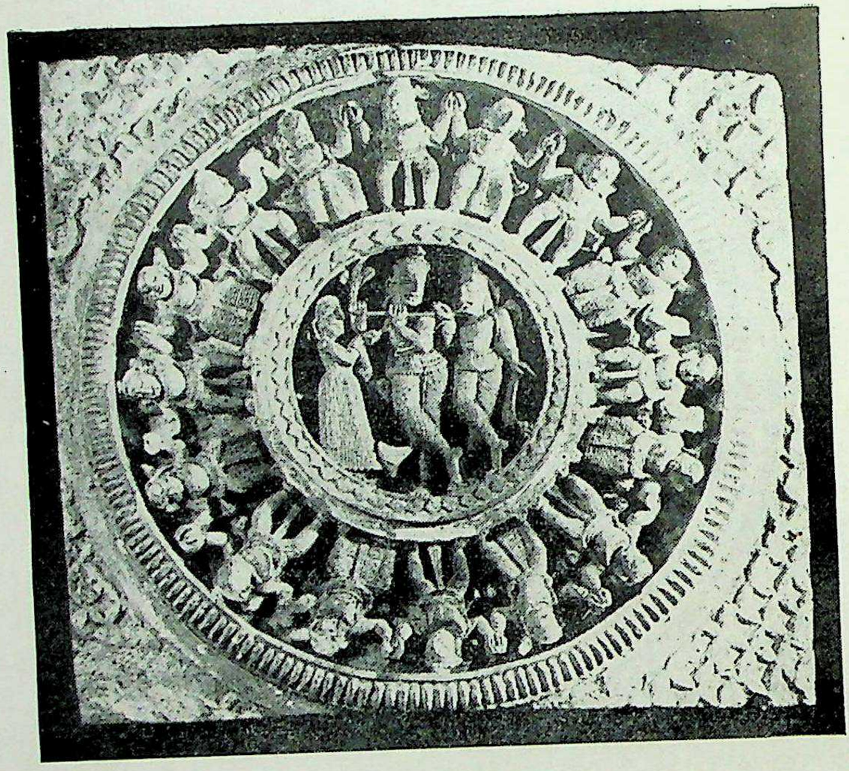

Fig. 18. RASAMANDALA

Temple terracotta. C. 17th cent. A. D. Burdwan.
Asutosh Museum

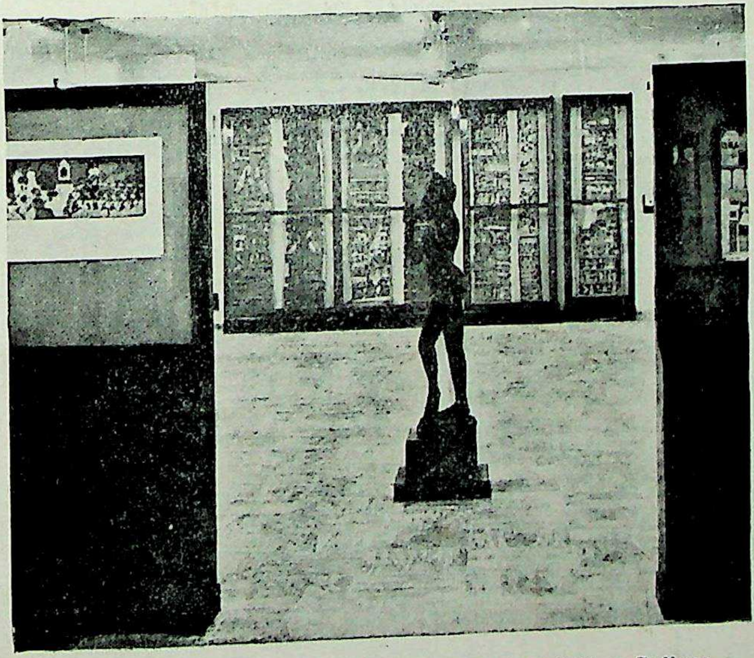

Fig. 19. General view of the Wood and Painting Gallery. Asutosh Museum
Centenary Building, Calcutta University

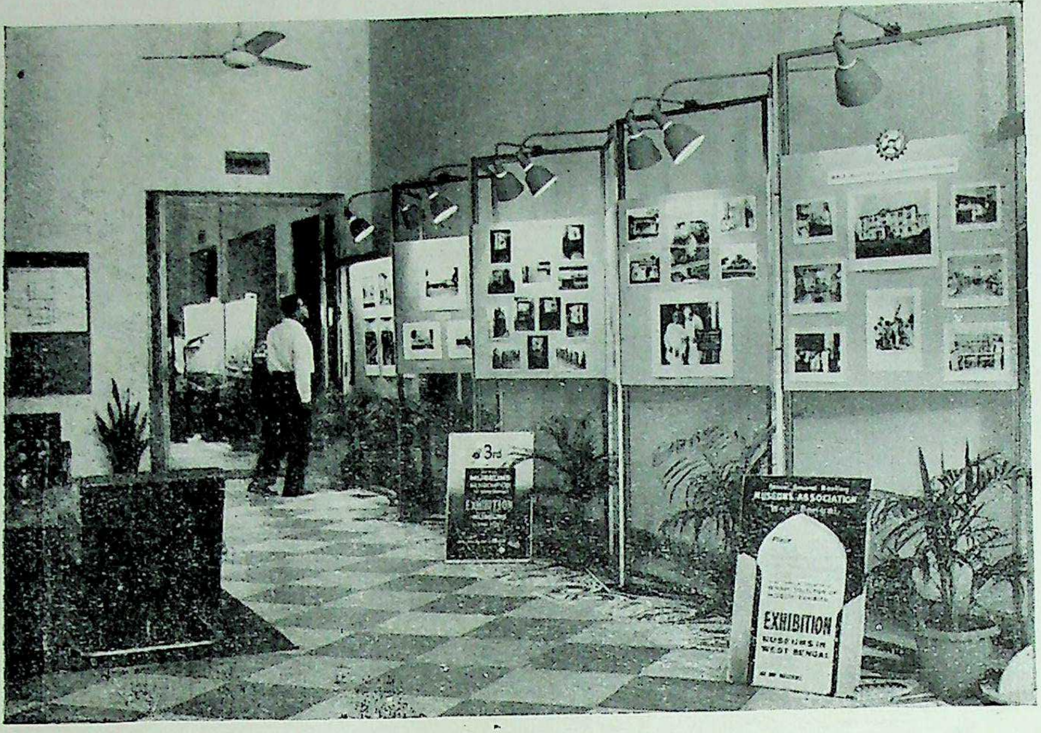
3rd
MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION
EXHIBITION
MUSEUMS IN WEST BENGAL

Fig. 20. A view of the Exhibition on Museums in West Bengal at Birla Industrial & Technological Museum, Calcutta, on the occasion of the 3rd Annual General meeting, Museums Association, West Bengal.

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प्राप्ति तिथि 5.10.71
State Museum, Library, Lko.